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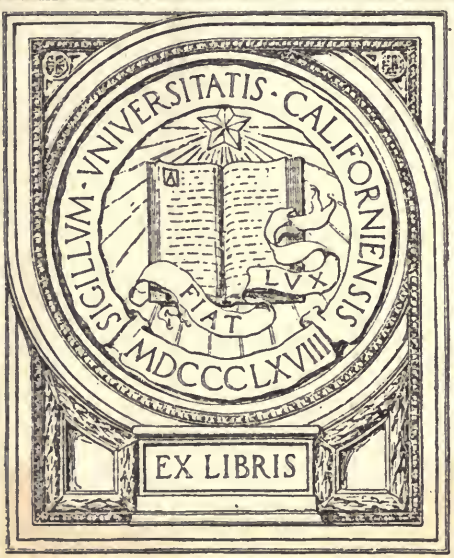

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GRETNA GREEN.

London. Richard Bentley, 1844.

CHRONICLES

OF

GRETNA GREEN.

By PETER ORLANDO HUTCHINSON.

"Marry in haste, and repent at leisure."—*Old Proverb.*

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
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1844.

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PREFACE.

The following Work must not be mistaken for a fiction: it is not a fiction, it is a history. If we have not everywhere preserved the sedate and plodding doggedness of the grave historian, this will nothing invalidate our veracity; for we believe we may confidently say, that we have not brought forward any fact, professedly as such, without having had good authority for so doing.

Our materials and our anecdotes were collected in the parish of Gretna Green itself, and that, too, from such sources as may be held worthy of credit. That portion of the Work most pleasurable to the general taste, will, perhaps, be the Second Volume, or the portion which comes down nearer to the present day; but if there are any persons living who have visited the Hymeneal shrine of Gretna, (which no doubt there are,) we hope they will not feel offended at anything these pages contain. Our purpose has not been to annoy any one, but only to write a history.

A word for the illustrations. The survey for the Map was made before our own eyes; and though not trigonometrically done, we believe it to be tolerably accurate. The views are engraved from sketches made by us on the spot, and their fidelity may be relied on.

London, December 1843.

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CHRONICLES

OF

GRETNA GREEN.

CHAPTER I.

Situation of Gretna.—The Debateable Land.—Walls of Agricola and Adrian.—Wall of Severus.—Arthur's Court.—Arthur's Queen insulted.—Peredur and the Knight.—Peredur's knight-errantry.—His Prowess.—Gwalchmai's Offer.—Peredur and Gwalchmai.—Peredur's Courtship.

Here Chapter First begins the work,
With matters worth your heeding,
With legends, old traditions, tales,
As ye may see by reading.

A DREAD cometh over us as we take our grey goose-quill in hand, and set our joints to the writing of this most notable history. There is something magical about the words "Gretna Green;" and we never hear them but we instantly "prick up our ears," as some tender poet saith, and are straightway filled with curiosity, interest, yearning, and desire. Wherefore, borne up and borne along by this conviction, and especially for the

explication of certain erroneous ideas which the distant world has assumed touching traditions of this place, do we submit the pages here following to the consideration of the reader.

The parish of Gretna, or Graitney, as it is sometimes written, lies in the county of Dumfries, and is situate, as most run-aways well know, close on the borders of Scotland and England: and that border is here defined by the small river, Sark. The western sea, or, under correction, the Solway Firth, lies here so contiguous that the tide flows up to the very bridge that runs over the said river, over which bridge runs the Queen's highway, 'twixt Carlisle and Annan, and over which highway run lovers not a few.

About two miles on the English side of the Sark, we have the river Esk, in some sort parallel thereunto, and also falling into the Solway Firth: it is traversed by a fair stone and iron bridge, and is a larger stream than the former by fourfold.

Betwixt these two, lies the "Debateable Land," a region especially noted in the pages of historiographers, and the scene of many a bloody strife when the borderers could not agree. This Debateable Land was, however, scarcely worth debating about, seeing that it is a bog, a march, a quagmire, a swamp, across which a man cannot pass at hazard, lest he sink, being made up of peat, which the inhabitants in the vicinage procure for fuel. Now,

a peat bog in this country, they call a "moss," or a "peat-moss," and this identical one goes by the name of "Solway Moss." There are many such, not only here about, but in divers parts of Scotland, Wales, and Ireland.

The great field of our discussions and speculations, which will fill the pages of this history, lying round the Firth of Solway, was, in the earliest ages, as authors say, occupied by a tribe of Britons known as the *Selgovæ;* and it was these whom Agricola with his Romans disconcerted, when he came this way with hostile intent. It was in the third year of his progress that he arrived here, and soon after he built the wall stretching from the land of the Dalriads to the eastern sea near the Maiden's Castle, vulgarly called Edinburgh. In the year 120, the emperor Adrian crossed over from Gaul, in order that he might gall the Caledonians with a fresh yoke; but he proceeded no further than York, for some old soldiers, who had before penetrated into the country with former commanders, told him that the painted savages fought well and hit hard; and moreover, the region that they fought and hit for, was not worth quarrelling about, being wild, mountainous, and barren. Wherefore, Adrian the emperor, resolved that he would not go further from home, but erected that vast Thus-far-shalt-thou-come-and-no-further, running from the western waters near Gretna

across the country to the river Tyne: a work which was designed to debar the wanderings of the Pictish Northerners, but which ill effected this end, since it stretched to the length of sixty English, or seventy Roman miles, and no more than eighteen hundred men were allotted for its defence on the southern side. It traversed these parts between merry Carlisle and Gretna Green of honourable mention, well-nigh skirting the Debateable Land: but owing to the loamy nature of the soil here, the industrious mattock of Time hath dug down the rampart and shovelled it into the ditch, even where it was before the Romans dug it out, so that now it is pretty well destroyed.

It should appear that this fortification consisted of a series of vallations, and that, in fact, they were as follows:—first, on the southern, or English side, a rampart ten or twelve feet high; then five paces towards Scotland, another rampart, or *agger* of equal size; outside that a ditch, being about nine feet deep, eleven feet wide at the top, and somewhat less at the bottom; and lastly, at about seven or eight paces further north from the ditch, a broad rampart, but considerably lower than the others. This fortification is said to have been made of earth only faced with turf; and Capitolinus, in his biography of Antoninus Pius, says that the wall erected in 81, by Agricola, and strengthened afterwards by this emperor in 140,

stretching from the Firth of Clyde to the Firth of Forth, was built in the same way also; but Camden contradicts this, in so far that he declares it to have been faced with square blocks of hewnstone; and this last assertion has been fully corroborated by the quantities of fragments and sculptured vestiges that have from time to time been discovered on this line. It is concluded to have been composed of soft materials like the other, but faced with masses of stone, in order to prevent the earth from falling into the ditch. There are certain scattered passages in Ossian, the son of Fingal, which go to support Mr. Camden,—as, for instance, in the poem ycleped "The War of Caros," where ye may thus read:—

"What does Caros, king of ships?" said the son, Oscar, of the now mournful Ossian; "spreads he the wings of his pride, [the Roman eagle,] bard of the times of old?"

"He spreads them, Oscar," replied the bard, "but it is behind *his gathered heap*. He looks over his *stones* with fear."

The "gathered heap" is here understood to be the wall of Agricola, near which the battle was fought, and the word "stones," clearly indicates the nature of the material with which it was constructed — at all events, externally. Caros is decided to have been no other than the usurper Carausius, who assumed the purple in 284, and

in this action the Caledonians were commanded by Oscar, the son of Ossian.

The wall of Severus, drawn across the island from the Solway, near where the modern Gretna Green lies, and following nearly the line of Adrian's, made some years before, was, according to Aurelius Victor, Orosius, Spartian, and others, a work of greater labour, vastness, and strength than any of the others that had been thrown up by the Romans. It was built of free-stone throughout, both internally and externally; it was well grouted with lime, so that it soon consolidated into a hard mass, and it was guarded by ten thousand troops, who kept watch in turrets and castles scattered along its whole extent at intervals. For two hundred years it kept the Picts in check, and would longer have continued to do so, had not the garrison been withdrawn, and ordered back to Italy.

Now, Gretna Green in aftertimes formed part of the territory of the renowned Prince Arthur, Basileus and Bretwalda of Britain, and merry Carlisle was one of his capital cities, wherein he held his principal court. "Arthur held his court in merry Carlisle," saith Sir Francis Palgrave; "and Peredur, the Prince of Sunshine, whose name we find amongst the princes of Strath-Clyde, is one of the great heroes of The Mabinogion, or tales of youth, long preserved by tradition amongst the Cymry."

We will not here enter upon any erudite discussion on the geographical knowledge of the ancients, or the extent of accuracy with which they constructed maps or described localities; nor will we (to descend from generalities to particularities) speculate on the probability that Carlisle, the former Caer-luel, not far from the river Esk, may or may not have have been the Caerlleon upon Usk, of the old romances. Arthur was at Caerlleon upon Usk, says the legend of Peredur-ab-Efrawc in the Mabinogion above alluded to; and it proceeds to set forth how he sat in his hall, surrounded by stalwart knights; and how Gwenhwyvar his queen, who was beautiful to a proverb, sat there also, along with a bevy of fair maidens, who discoursed sweetly, or wove tapestry and other cunning needlework. "Meanwhile, Peredur journeyed on towards Arthur's court," are the words of Lady Guest's translation; "and before he reached it, another knight had been there, who gave a ring of thick gold at the door of the gate for holding his horse, and went into the hall, where Arthur and his household and Gwenhwyvar and her maidens were assembled. And the page of the chamber was serving Gwenhwyvar with a golden goblet. Then the knight dashed the liquor that was therein upon her face, and upon her stomacher, and gave her a violent blow on the face, and said, 'If any have the

boldness to dispute this goblet with me, and to revenge the insult to Gwenhwyvar, let him follow me to the meadow, and there I will await him.' So the knight took his horse and rode to the meadow: and all the household hung down their heads, lest any of them should be requested to go and avenge the insult to Gwenhwyvar. For it seemed to them that no one would have ventured on so daring an outrage, unless he possessed such powers, through magic or charms, that none could be able to take vengeance upon him. Then, behold, Peredur entered the hall."

Here he inquires for Arthur amongst the company; but Sir Kai, who had a very unamiable and discourteous disposition, answers in a most untoward manner, and desires to know what he wants of Arthur? After a while, Peredur repeats his question: "'Tall man,' said he, 'show me which is Arthur.' 'Hold thy peace,' said Kai, 'and go after the knight who went hence to the meadow, and take from him the goblet, and overthrow him, and possess thyself of his horse and arms, and then shalt thou receive the order of knighthood.' 'I will do so, tall man,' said Peredur. So he turned his horse's head towards the meadow; and when he came there, the knight was riding up and down, proud of his strength, and valour, and noble mien. 'Tell me,' said the knight, 'didst thou see any one coming

after me from the court?' 'The tall man that was there,' said he, 'desired me to come and overthrow thee, and take from thee the goblet, and thy horse, and thy armour for myself.' 'Silence!' said the knight; 'go back to the court, and tell Arthur from me, either to come himself, or to send some other to fight with me; and unless he do so quickly, I will not wait for him.' 'By my faith,' said Peredur, 'choose thou whether it shall be willingly or unwillingly, but I will have the horse, and the arms, and the goblet.' And upon this the knight ran at him furiously, and struck him a violent blow with the shaft of his spear, between the neck and the shoulder. 'Haha, lad!' said Peredur, 'my mother's servants were not used to play with me in this wise; therefore, thus will I play with thee.' And hereupon he struck him with a sharp-pointed fork, and it hit him in the eye, and came out at the back of his neck, so that he instantly fell down lifeless.

"'Verily,' said Owain, the son of Urien, to Kai, 'thou wert ill advised when thou didst send that madman [meaning Peredur] after the knight; for one of two things must befall him,—he must either be overthrown or slain. If he is overthrown by the knight, he will be counted by him to be an honourable person of the court, and an eternal disgrace will it be to Arthur and his warriors: and if he is slain, the disgrace will be the same, and more-

over his sin will be upon him; therefore, will I go and see what has befallen him.' So Owain went to the meadow, and he found Peredur dragging the man about. 'What art thou doing thus?' said Owain. 'This iron coat,' said Peredur, 'will never come from off him, not by my efforts, at any rate.' And Owain unfastened his armour and his clothes. 'Here, my good soul,' said he, 'is a horse and armour better than thine. Take them joyfully, and come with me to Arthur to receive the order of knighthood, for thou dost merit it.'"

Now, gentle reader, if it be that this Caerlleon, where Arthur then held his court, be Carlisle city nigh unto Gretna, Peredur compassed this achievement in the meadow that stretches along beneath the castle walls, as ye may behold at this day; and the Mabinogion will further tell ye how this rare warrior traversed these regions, doing service to distressed maidens, and swearing oaths ten fathom deep to his lady love; for, even twelve or thirteen centuries ago, there seems to have been something loving and lovable pervading the atmosphere of the Solway. "And in the evening he entered a valley," we are informed; "and at the head of the valley he came to a hermit's cell, and the hermit welcomed him gladly, and there he spent the night. And in the morning he arose, and when he went forth, behold a shower of snow

had fallen the night before, and a hawk had killed a wild fowl in front of the cell; and the noise of the horse scared the hawk away, and a raven alighted upon the bird. And Peredur stood and compared the blackness of the raven, and the whiteness of the snow, and the redness of the blood, to the hair of the lady that best he loved, which was blacker than jet, and to her skin, which was whiter than the snow, and to the two red spots upon her cheeks, which were redder than the blood upon the snow appeared to be.

"Now Arthur and his Court were in search of Peredur. 'Know ye,' said Arthur, 'who is the knight with the long spear that stands by the brook up yonder?' 'Lord,' said one of them, 'I will go and learn who he is.' So the youth came to the place where Peredur was, and asked him what he did thus, and who he was. And from the intensity with which he thought upon the lady whom best he loved, he gave him no answer. Then the youth thrust at Peredur with his lance, and Peredur turned upon him, and struck him over his horse's crupper to the ground. And after this, four and twenty youths came to him, and he did not answer one more than another, but gave the same reception to all, bringing them with one single thrust to the ground. And then came Kai, and spoke to Peredur rudely and angrily; and Peredur took

him with his lance under the jaw, and cast him from him with a thrust, so that he broke his arm and his shoulder blade, and he rode over him one and twenty times. And while he lay thus, stunned with the violence of the pain that he had suffered, his horse returned back at a wild and prancing pace. And when the household saw the horse come back without his rider, they rode forth in haste to the place where the encounter had been. And when they first came there, they thought that Kai was slain; but they found that if he had a skilful physician, he yet might live. And Peredur moved not from his meditation, on seeing the concourse that was around Kai. And Kai was brought to Arthur's tent, and Arthur caused skilful physicians to come to him. And Arthur was grieved that Kai had met with this reverse, for he loved him greatly.

"'Then,' said Gwalchmai, 'it is not fitting that any should disturb an honourable knight from his thought unadvisedly; for either he is pondering some damage that he has sustained, or he is thinking on the lady whom best he loves. And through such ill-advised proceeding, perchance this misadventure has befallen him who last met with him. And if it seem well to thee, lord, I will go and see if this knight has changed from his thought; and if he has, I will ask him courteously to come and visit thee.'

"Then Kai was wrath, and he spoke angry and spiteful words. 'Gwalchmai,' said he; 'I know that thou wilt bring him, because he is fatigued. Little praise and honour, nevertheless, wilt thou have from vanquishing a weary knight, who is tired with fighting. Yet, thus hast thou gained the advantage over many. And while thy speech and thy soft words last, a coat of thin linen were armour enough for thee; and thou wilt not need to break either lance or sword in fighting with the knight in the state he is in.'

"Then said Gwalchmai to Kai, 'Thou mightest use more pleasant words, wert thou so minded; and it behoves thee not upon me to wreak thy wrath and thy displeasure. Methinks I shall bring the knight hither without breaking either my arm or my shoulder.'

"Then said Arthur to Gwalchmai, 'Thou speakest like a wise and prudent man; go, and take enough of armour about thee, and choose thy horse.' And Gwalchmai accoutred himself, and rode forward hastily to the place where Peredur was.

"And Peredur was resting on the shaft of his spear, pondering the same thought, and Gwalchmai came to him without any signs of hostility, and said to him, 'If I thought that it would be as agreeable to thee as it would be to me, I would converse with thee. I have also a mes-

sage from Arthur unto thee, to pray thee to come and visit him. And two men have been before on this errand.'

"'That is true,' said Peredur; 'and uncourteously they came. They attacked me, and I was annoyed thereat, for it was not pleasing to me to be drawn from the thought I was in, for I was thinking on the lady whom best I love.'

"Said Gwalchmai, 'This was not an ungentle thought, and I should marvel if it were pleasant to thee to be drawn from it.'"

This narrative was so full of nature, chivalry, simplicity, and poetry, that we could not resist quoting it in full. After this greeting, the knights, together with Arthur and his retinue, returned to Caerlleon; and the following passage still further shews the amorousness of the atmosphere in these parts.

"And the first night Peredur came to Caerlleon, to Arthur's court, and as he walked in the city after his repast, behold, there met him Angharad Law Eurawc. 'By my faith, sister,' said Peredur, 'thou art a beauteous and lovely maiden; and were it pleasing to thee, I could love thee above all women.'"

The legend does not precisely inform us as to whether this was the lady on whom he had been before pondering, though it appears probable; howbeit, he assuredly got a very ungentle answer.

"'I pledge my faith,' said she, 'that I do not love thee, nor will I ever do so.'"

Notwithstanding this rebuff, her admirer was nothing daunted. "'I also pledge my faith,' said Peredur, 'that I will never speak a word to any christian again, until thou come to love me above all men.'" And Peredur kept his word so rigourously that he obtained the name of the Dumb Youth; and furthermore, Peredur gained his victory over the lady. After various adventures and some lapse of time, we are told that Angharad Law Eurawc again met him, but without recognising his person; "'I declare to heaven, chieftain,' said she, 'woful is it that thou canst not speak; for couldest thou speak, I would love thee best of all men; and by my faith, although thou canst not, I do love thee best of all.'

"'Heaven reward thee, my sister,' said Peredur; 'by my faith I do also love thee.'"

After this happy triumph, let no swain despair, albeit his lady do not at first seem kindly disposed. Some there be who say that perseverance will not bend a woman's will, and that if she is not disposed to love to-day, neither will she be disposed to-morrow. He who spoke thus, methinks, had never been loved at all, either yesterday, to-day, or to-morrow, and to-morrow up to the end of his life. We know one who put the following stanza into the mouth of a fair maiden,

when she had to reprove her persecutor for being too importunate, *videlicet:*

> "Pray leave me, if thou courtest mine esteem;
> This heart is mine, if that thou seekest still;
> Thou hast my mind,—then why, oh idly dream
> That perseverance moves a woman's will?"

Other knights, however, besides Peredur have proved the fallacy of such assertions; for it is only those who persevere in being disagreeable that cannot move a woman's will by time; since those who go to work modestly, meekly, and deferentially, will, for the most part, compass their end. Have we not known twenty young folks of the opposite sexes come together, who, at their first acquaintanceship were not only indifferent, but were absolutely disagreeable to each other! and yet, have we not known that time and better knowledge of their several dispositions and virtues, have so changed the aspect of their opinions, that many of them have, in the event, sworn matrimony to each other for good or bad, for better for worse, all the days of their existence. Let all swains therefore hold up Peredur, the Prince of Sunshine, as a cheering precedent, never allowing themselves to be stricken down by one blow, or defeated by incipient difficulties.

CHAPTER II.

The Picts.—First Gretna Nuptials.—Origin of Chaucer's "Wife's Tale."—Arthur and the Grim Baron.—The Grim Lady.—The Secret revealed.—Gawaine's Magnanimity.—Fetching the Bride.—The Reward of Friendship.—The Bride's Tale.—The First Marriage at Gretna.

The marriage of Sir Gawaine : and
Important 'tis, I ween ;
Because this is the first that e'er
Was done at Gretna Green.

In former times the modern territory of Gretna Green, now about to be celebrated, formed part and parcel of the Roman province of Valencia, so called by Tacitus. Then, in aftertimes, came the Picts, picking their way from the north country ; and nice pickings they got from the bones of their predecessors, who had retired but a short space before : here awhile they feasted and battened, until such time as they had picked the said bones clean, when they crossed the river Sark for more, broke over the works of Severus, and invaded the merriment that ever reigned with

King Arthur in merry Carlisle. Then, behold, arose, like an exhalation, this mirror of chivalry, and his notable paladins; and the herein-before-mentioned territory became the district of Reged in the kingdom of Strath-Clyde and Cumbria, famous also as having been the land over which Rhyderc, or Roderic, the Magnificent, reigned with great pomp and circumstance, and also wherein the enchanter Merlin prophesied.

Now about this era the great Spirit of Affection breathed violent love into the atmosphere of these parts, so that knights were heavy of heart when the day was light, and then essayed to become lighter when it was dark, by speaking amiable words to fair forms, which appeared at turret windows o' nights. Every state of existence hath "an end in view;" every undertaking a wished-for consummation; every race a winning post; and every project a goal: wherefore, no man ever falleth into honourable love but what his "end in view,"—his consummation, his winning post, and his goal, will be matrimony. Thus it has been with many a doughty hero; and it now becomes us to record the nuptials of that famous Round Table Knight Sir Gawaine, whose espousals were celebrated here, in a region which has ever since his day been so renowned both for love, and for love's end in view, consummation, winning-post, and goal.

On these nuptials we lay great stress, because they are the first of any note actually occurring in or near Gretna, which we can narrate from authentic chronicles for the information of the companionable reader, and consequently their importance, in a historical point of view, will be readily accorded by him or her, seeing that they stand up like a beacon of a dark night, shining brightly through the surrounding obscurity of such remote ages, and at the same time offer a fair precedent to commence from.

> "King Arthur lives in merry Carlisle,
> And seemly is to see;
> And there with him Queen Guenever,
> That bride so bright of blee."

Thus begins the chronicle above alluded to; a chronicle, as antiquaries tell us, which furnished the venerable Chaucer with the theme for his "Wife's Tale." At the date of our story, these sovereigns were revelling in Christmas festivities, dispensing hospitality to all the brave and the gentle of their court: and one day, whilst they sat at the well garnished board spread upon the dais, behold a young and beautiful damsel entered the hall of the castle, and threw herself at the feet of the king, craving of him "a boon." This, according to the usage of chivalry, was incontinently granted, without stopping to inquire

what pains or penalties it might impose upon the granter: and then the lady proceeded to say, that a "grim baron," whom they met by hazard the day before, had sorely misused her, and had carried away her lover captive to his "bower." This wanton outrage kindled the ire of the company, and Arthur loudly called for his horse, and his sword Excalibar, swearing that he would avenge the maiden, and never leave the grim baron until he had made him quail. Wherefore, having accoutred himself, he hastened away in search of his foe: but, alas and well-a-day for chivalry and King Arthur! the baron's castle stood upon enchanted ground—and what mortal man, be he vavasour or villain, could ever contend against witchery?

"On magic ground the castle stood,
And fenced with many a spell;
No valiant knight could tread thereon,
But strait his courage fell.

"Forth then rushed that Carlisle knight—
King Arthur felt the charm;
His sturdy sinews lost their strength,
Down sunk his feeble arm.

"Now yield thee! yield thee! King Arthur;
Now yield thee unto me:
Or fight with me, or lose thy land:
No better terms may be."

These terms imposed by this "grim baron," were hard terms certainly for the King of Britain

and the prince of knighthood; but one loophole of escape still remained, and one proviso was still offered to the prostrate Arthur. If, indeed, he would swear by the Rood and promise by his faye, that he would return upon next New Year's Day and bring his enchanted conqueror word, "what it is that all women most desire," then in that case he would be allowed to depart and return to Carlisle. This condition was to be his ransom, and cruelly he was constrained to wound his honour and submit.

"King Arthur then held up his hand,
And sware upon his faye;
Then took his leave of the grim baron,
And fast he rode away.

"And he rode east, and he rode west,
And did of all inquire
What thing it is all women crave,
And what they most desire.

"Some told him riches, pomp, or state,—
Some raiment fine and bright,—
Some told him mirth, some flattery,—
And some a gallant knight."

In this perplexity he sped about over the wilderness sorely troubled with doubts and misgivings; for, as each person "told a different thing," he could in no wise satisfy his mind, and come to a conclusion. As he rode, ruthfully across a moor, he espied a lady sitting between an oak and a green holly, dressed in "red scarlet," but she

was so dreadfully deformed of person and so uncomely of feature, that no one could look at her without disgust and loathing. Her nose was crooked, her chin was all awry, she had an eye, not in her forehead like Polyphemus, but where perhaps it was, if possible worse, that is, even where her mouth ought to have been; and her hair, like serpents, clung about her pallid and cadaverous cheeks. As he approached, she accosted the King in seemly language, but he was so stricken with her disgracious appearance, that he was unable to reply. Somewhat moved to anger at his silence, she demanded what wight he was, that did not deign to speak? adding, that perchance she might be able to ease his pain, albeit "foul to see." Encouraged by this possibility of alleviation, he addressed the "grim lady," by declaring, that if peradventure she could help him in his need, he would grant her any favour she might ask of him. She then revealed to him the important secret that should serve as his ransom from the baron; and which, in fine was, that "All women like to have their will—this was their chief desire;" at the same time reserving to herself, as a reward for her service, that he should find some courtly knight who would come and marry her. Arthur returned to Guenever his queen, and to his paladins, rejoiced, of a verity, that he had been rescued from the wizard power

of his foe, but piteously grieved at reflecting on the oath he had sworn to the deformed lady who had communicated the secret; in the first place, believing that no knight would ever, from disinterestedness, and scarcely from loyalty, wed so loathsome a creature; and, secondly, it pained him much even to suffer any friend, who might be willing from magnanimity, to make so great a sacrifice of his happiness, as to become united to her merely out of pure love to his prince. And surely, any one who could start up and offer himself on such a shrine, were indeed a pattern for true friendship, allegiance, and devotion. These perplexing matters he duly set forth when he reached Carlisle city; but his generous nephew, Sir Gawaine, to the astonishment and admiration of all then present, and of all posterity ever since, arose and resolutely offered himself as his uncle's deliverer, as ye may here see in the legend:

"Then bespake him Sir Gawaine,
That was ever a gentle knight:
'That loathly lady I will wed,
Therefore be merry and light.'

"'Now nay, now nay, good Sir Gawaine,
My sister's son ye be;
This loathly lady 's all too grim
And all too foul for ye.'"

Then the tortured uncle recapitulates the appalling catalogue of her deformities; but still his

kinsman, stedfast in his virtue, persists in sacrificing himself for the sake of Arthur. He proceeds—

"'What though her chin stand all awry,
And she be foul to see,
I 'll marry her, uncle, for thy sake,
And I 'll thy ransom be!'

"'Now thanks, now thanks, good Sir Gawaine,
And a blessing thee betide;
To-morrow we 'll have knights and squires,
And we 'll go fetch the bride.'"

Bent on this resolution, they departed next day for the moor, accompanied by Sir Launcelet, Sir Stephen, Sir Kay, Sir Banier, Sir Bore, Sir Garratt, Sir Tristrem, and others of equal renown; and when they came to the forest, there, forsooth, they found the lady, clad in "red scarlet" as heretofore, sitting beneath a holly-tree. At the sight of her, Sir Kay, or Kai, who in all the old romances and fabliaux is uniformly described as being very uncourteous in speech and bearing, is sorely unmannered in his observations, until the volunteer bridegroom calls him to account; adding, that, let her appearance be what it may, still some one among them must take her to wife.

"'Marry, i'faith,' then said Sir Kay,
'I' the devil's name anon;
Get me a wife wherever I may,
In sooth *she* shall be none.'"

The courtiers were so disgusted at the issue of their progress, that they appear rather disposed

hastily to take up their hawks and hounds and depart, than to tarry on the moor dallying about the lady, declaring that indeed they would not any of them wed her "for cities, nor for towns."

"'Peace, lordlings, peace!' Sir Gawaine said,
'Nor make debate and strife;
This loathly lady I will take,
And marry her to wife.'

"Then up they took that loathly dame,
And home anon they bring;
And there Sir Gawaine he her wed,
And married her with a ring."

An affectionate and disinterested act to serve a friend, is never without its guerdon; and the moral appended to this tale, and the just reward that came upon Sir Gawaine, is passing good, as ye may here read in the stanzas following:—

"And when they were in wed-bed laid,
And all were done away,—
'Come turn to me, my own wed lord,
Come turn to me, I pray.'

"Sir Gawaine scant could lift his head,
For sorrow and for care;
When lo, instead of that loathly dame,
He saw a young lady fair!

"Sweet blushes stained her rud-red cheek,
Her eyes were black as sloe,
The ripening cherry swelled her lip,
And all her neck was snow.

"Sir Gawaine kissed that lady fair,
Lying upon the sheet,

And swore, as he was a true knight,
That spice was never so sweet."

The bride then explains, that her father was an aged knight, who took a "false lady" to wife, (apparently a step-mother,) who worked her all this misfortune; who, through magic constrained her to dwell amidst moors and mosses, woods and wilds, until such time as some courtly knight should marry her; and who had also, out of the same jealousy, doomed her brother to live in the practice of rapine and oppression—to be, in short, the "grim baron," albeit he was by birth and temperament, the heritor of everything gentle in blood and bearing. The spell, she added, was now broken, and that she was "herself again." Her brother also, had by the same influence become disenchanted; that henceforth she should be "a true lady," and he "a gentle knight." In gratitude to heaven for the good fortune that has thus unexpectedly settled upon him, and with increased love towards her at the transformation, he gives himself up entirely to his wife, reserving no authority, no power, no dominion, but vowing that she shall ever "have all her will," which words, as the reader may recall, bore away the important secret that ransomed King Arthur.

Hence we are pleasantly instructed that to have their will, is to have that which all ladies most desire—a fact of easy belief, seeing that if they

have their will, they have every want, wish, whim, and luxury whatsoever at instant command. Methinks, that if the axiom had been extended to men, there would have arisen up but few of that sex who would have declared it false. This ancient idea hath been prettily worked out by a more recent versifier in the form of a laconic epigram, as ye may here see, *videlicet:*

"Kind Peggy kissed her husband with these words,
'Mine own sweet Will, how dearly I love thee!'
'If true,' quoth Will, 'the world none such affords.'
And that 'tis true I dare her warrant be;
For ne'er was woman yet, or good or ill,
But loved always best her own sweet Will."

We do not insist that this marriage was really celebrated on the site of the present renowned marrying establishment ycleped Gretna Hall, or "The Hall" in the vicinage; but, this is the first execution occurring in or near this region of which we have discovered any the most remote mention on the musty vellum of **ayntyent kronykyll.** And the importance of the first marriage happening at a place, or near a place, (for the ancients were very bad geographers, and were not particular in noting localities,) will be readily admitted, when we recollect that the object of this work is to record the matrimonial transactions that have befallen on this amorous soil.

CHAPTER III.

Legend of King Arthur, and Sir Owain.

How Arthur went to sleep one day
Whilst sitting in his chair;
And how Sir Owain, with great essay,
Subdued a lady fair.

Not only do the legends of Britain teem with records of murder, as being the chiefest delight of our forefathers, but the same spirit runs through the legends and traditions of all other countries whatsoever. We need but to refer to the Neibelungen Lay, wherein the manners of our more remote Scandinavian progenitors are duly pictured forth; and here we shall see that the greatest virtue in this world, was to have butchered the greatest number of our fellow creatures, and the greatest bliss in the next, the quaffing the blood of our enemies out of their own skulls.

Asgardia, the paradise of Odin, who himself was styled *Oal Fadr*, or *Val Fadr*, the Father of Slaughter in the Runic, and Val-Halla, the Hall

of Slaughter, are names indicative of the prevailing turn of men's minds. None were considered worthy to go to Val-Halla except such as died in war or by violence—so ignominious was it considered to die reposedly in bed; and this same notion appears in some sort to have come down to the Turks and Tartars, who look to a place in the Seventh Heaven. Such puny and despicable wretches as died peaceably at home, were consigned to a place designated *Hel*, the meothesis of suffering and ease, — a region wherein the dwellers seem to have been oppressed with what we term ennui, not pleasure, and yet not positive suffering; a sort of negative existence, tedious, tiring, and wearisome. But the place of actual torture, the hell, the bottomless pit, the gehenna, this dreadful dungeon of horror, was ycleped *Nixleim*; and to the excruciating torments of Nixleim the ill-natured were devoted. Hence ill-nature in this world was held the greatest crime of which man could be guilty, and deserving of the greatest punishment which the imagination of man could devise: and hence, also, we learn how highly the possession of good-nature and courteous bearing was rated, even in an age so barbarous. This fact strikes us as the great redeeming point to all the other savage practices of the Teutonic race; that amidst their extreme degradation, their love of ruthless war, as being the only manly and

honourable pastime, and their delight in vengeance, oppression, and indiscriminate slaughter, this quality of good-nature should be considered so highly; or, which is the same thing, that ill-nature should be looked upon as deserving the cruellest retribution which the flames and the demons of their gehenna could inflict.

If these savages could so dearly prize an amiable mind, when the softer qualities were less in demand, how much more shall we, now in an age of civilization, polish, and courtesy, uphold a possession so fair, so sweet, so beauteous to behold?

In the later ages of chivalry, we hear less of this thirst for blind murder, and more of gentle manners. Knights fought then, not so much for the sake of committing slaughter, as for the sake of putting down the despotic and oppressive; and as it was a great virtue to be bold in the field, so also it was no less a virtue to be courteous in the bower and the hall. Sir Owain is thus commended for his sweetness by the old chroniclers, and Sir Kai is denounced by them for being blunt, cross, rude, and ungentle in speech.

One day King Arthur was sitting in the principal chamber of his palace at Caerlleon, surrounded by several of his noble vassals, together with his queen the Princess Gwenhwyvar, and her handmaidens, some of the company amusing themselves relating stories of great achievements,

and others busied about such other pastimes as best consorted with their fancies. The king sat in the centre of the apartment upon a seat of green rushes, over which was spread a covering of flame-coloured satin; and a cushion of red satin supported his elbow. "Flame-colour," or rather *yellow-red*, as the word *melyngoch* in the original signifies, was a dye of which the ancients were very fond, as it is frequently mentioned by the troubadours and minstrels of the middle ages, especially when alluding to costly stuffs pertaining to princes and vavasours; and even now-a-days in Wales, amongst the most unsophisticated of the Kymri, this hue tints many of the garments worn by the women. The cushion was an indispensable in every chamber; guests and wayfarers were welcomed and made comfortable by their entertainers by the act of presenting them with cushions to sit or recline on; and the old triplet sets it forth as one of three things that a man could hardly do without, as thus:

"Tri pheth gweddus i wr eu bod yn ei dy,—

"Ei wraig yn ddiwair;
Ei glustog yn ei gadair;
A'i dely yn gywair."

"Three things proper for a man to have in his house,—

"A virtuous wife;
His cushion in his chair;
And his harp in tune."

And as the son of Pendragon sat there, he grew a little drowsy whilst waiting for his dinner, but not forgetting dignity to himself, or politeness to his friends, he spoke thus:—"If I thought you would not disparage me, I would sleep while I wait for my repast; and you can entertain one another with relating tales, and can obtain a flagon of mead and some meat from Kai." Then he leant back and took a nap. The seneschal, or dapifer, Sir Kai, went to the cellar for mead and a golden goblet, and soon returned, likewise bringing "a handful of skewers upon which were broiled collops of meat." Having discussed this, and then having modestly contended amongst themselves as to who should *not* tell the tale, by framing many coy and pretty excuses, Kynon, the son of Clydno, is finally prevailed on, and he relates his strange adventures in the Forest of Brécéliande. The hearing of this so stirred up the curiosity and love of adventure in the bosom of Sir Owain, one of the listeners, that he set off the very next day toward the same forest,—a proceeding which led to his marriage with the widowed countess, as we will tell anon.

He journeyed on through a valley, in the midst of which ran a river, until such time as he came to a stately castle at the end of it, where he beheld two youths with yellow hair, clad in garments of yellow satin, and each with a frontlet

of gold on his head, and golden clasps upon their insteps. They each bore an ivory bow strung with the sinews of the stag, "and they were shooting their daggers." Then he greeted an old man, who introduced him into the castle, where he was disarrayed by four and twenty beauteous damsels, who had been sitting at the window embroidering satin; and in place of his own habiliments, they dressed him in an under vest and a doublet of fine linen, a robe, a surcoat, and a mantle of yellow satin, trimmed with a broad gold band. They placed cushions both beneath and around him; they brought silver bowls for him to wash in, and linen towels to dry himself with, some being white and some green. He feasted sumptuously, waited on by some of the damsels, and then the aged man entered into conversation. Owain told him that he had come that way, bent upon attempting an adventure in which Kynon had previously been foiled and overthrown, namely, that of fighting with the Black Knight who guarded the Fountain. After smiling at his fool-hardiness, the man reluctantly gave him every necessary information, and Owain took his course through the country as directed.

Many strange haps bring him to an open plain, wherein stood a large tree covered with intensely green foliage, beneath which was the fountain; beside the fountain there was a large slab of

marble, and on the slab, attached to it by a chain, there stood a bowl of silver. Acting as directed, he took the bowl, and threw a bowlful of water upon the stone; and immediately his ears were greeted with a most terrific peal of thunder, together with a shower of hailstones so violent, that he was fain to lift his shield over himself and his horse's head for safety. The weather then became fair, but every leaf that had been upon the tree was gone. Soon afterwards a flight of birds came and settled upon the branches, and sung a sweeter strain than ever Owain had heard in all his life before, in the midst of which he was suddenly pained by the sound of something like murmuring and complaining. Then appeared a knight on a black horse making hastily towards him, clothed in black armour and trappings of black velvet, and with a pennon on the head of his spear of the same sable hue. Now, whilst Arthur was sleeping, and Kynon was relating to Gwenhwyvar and the rest, all the particulars of his encounter with this defender of the glade, as it occurred to him before the same was undertaken by Owain, he set forth how that the knight unhorsed him by the fury of his onset, and then when he was overthrown, how he passed the shaft of his black lance through the bridle rein of his horse, riding away with it together with his own, leaving Sir Kynon on the ground, not deigning even to bestow

so much notice on him as to imprison him, or despoil him of his arms. He also pleasantly told, how that when he returned discomfitted back by the way he had come, and met the man who had directed him to the Fountain, "it was a marvel that he did not melt down into a liquid pool, through the shame he felt at the man's derision."

Howbeit, Sir Owain either had better luck or better address, for it fared differently with him, and of a truth, it fared differently with this foul paynim. Having spurred against each other so vigorously as to break both their lances, they drew their swords and fought blade to blade. "Then Owain," saith the Llyfr Coch o Hergest, "struck the knight a blow through his helmet, head-piece, and visor, and through the skin, and the flesh, and the bone, until it wounded the very brain." Feeling that he had at last received a mortal wound, he incontinently turned his horse's head and fled toward his castle. Owain pursued so close upon him that they both galloped over the draw-bridge together, but here the portcullis was let down upon them by the warders with a sudden crash. The knight of the castle sped through the gateway into the court, "and the portcullis," continues the legend, "was let fall upon Owain; and it struck his horse behind the saddle, and cut him in two, and carried away the rowels of the spurs that were upon Owain's heels." Of a verity

this was "coming it close." Owain was now in a cage. "And the portcullis descended to the floor. And the rowels of the spurs and part of the horse were without, and Owain, with the other part of the horse remained between the two gates, and the inner gate was closed, so that Owain could not go thence; and Owain was in a perplexing situation." Perplexing indeed,—and no marvel either.

Whilst here, he could peep through a hole in the gate, and he could see a fair and spacious street with houses on each side; in this street he perceived a beauteous damsel, having yellow curling hair, a frontlet of gold on her forehead, shoes of variegated leather on her feet, and a vesture of yellow silk thrown over her graceful form. She approached the gate, desiring that it might be opened; but the enclosed hero laments his inability to do so, saying that it is no more in his power for him to serve her, than it may be hers to serve him in such a "perplexing situation." Then responded she:—"Truly, it is very sad that thou canst not be released, and every woman ought to succour thee, for I never saw one more faithful in the service of ladies than thou. As a friend thou art the most sincere, and as a lover the most devoted." Upon that she presents him with a ring, telling him to turn the stone inwards and to close his fingers upon it, adding, that as

long as he concealed the stone, it would indeed conceal him. Through the efficacy of this gift he evades his enemies, who soon returned to him to take vengeance; he invisibly follows his deliverer to a place of safety, where she restores him with a sumptuous feast and courteous entertainment.

Not long after this, the nobleman who owned the castle dies of the wounds he had received of Owain, and the "Countess of the Fountain," his widow, with whom Owain was desperately smitten as he saw her amidst the mourners of the funeral procession, but not at that time knowing who she was, remained alone in her possessions, unprotected herself, and unable to defend her territory from her rapacious and lawless neighbours. On being so struck with her beauty, Owain asks his companion who she might be? The maiden answers him that she is the Countess of the Fountain, and her mistress. "Verily," said Owain, "she is the woman that I love best." "Verily," said the maiden, "she shall also love thee not a little." Having said this, she determined to pave the way to her mistress's heart for her guest; thinking, according to the idea of the times, that none could be so fit to defend the lady's acres, and hills, and mansions, as a knight so doughty, and at the same time so full of service to the softer sex. "Come here and sleep," said she, addressing him with this intention; "and I will

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go and woo for thee." So Owain slept, and the maiden went to the castle.

When she arrived thither, she found her mistress in a woful plight, mourning and wailing in such sort, that she was unable to endure the sight of any one. Her bower-woman, whose name was Luned, as we are now informed, then saluted her with meet inquiries; but receiving no answer, she craves to know how it is, and what ails her that she cannot speak? The countess here reproaches Luned that she has not been near her so long, but has retired herself away even when her affliction most needed consolation and society. The maiden reproves her lady for giving way to a useless grief, since her good lord was gone, and no excess of tears could recall him. The countess declares there is not a man in the whole 'varsal 'orld that can compare with her lamented husband; but Luned dissents from her here, hinting that she knows better, and that she knows of some great advantage that might accrue to her mistress. Words, howbeit, run so high, that the attendant hastily quits the presence of the countess on having delivered these sentiments, and hopes that evil may betide the one who shall make the first advancement towards reconciliation. Yet was the haughty lady's curiosity excited, insomuch that she burned to know what Luned had to say; and here follows a passage of exquisite nature:—"The

countess arose and followed her to the door of the chamber, and began coughing loudly. And when Luned looked back, the countess beckoned to her; and she returned to the countess." These manœuvres indeed brought about a reconciliation; the lady was content to listen, and her bower-woman to woo for Owain in his absence.

"Thou knowest," said Luned, "that except by warfare and arms it is impossible for thee to preserve thy possessions; delay not, therefore, to seek some one who can defend them."

"And how can I do that?" said the countess.

"I will tell thee," said Luned; "unless thou canst defend the fountain, thou canst not maintain thy dominions; and no one can defend the fountain, except it be a knight of Arthur's household; and I will go to Arthur's court, and ill betide me, if I return thence without a warrior who can guard the fountain, as well as, or even better, than he who defended it formerly."

"That will be hard to perform," said the countess. "Go, however, and make proof of that which thou hast promised."

This artful conference being ended, the maid retired; but in place of going to Arthur's court at Caerlleon, she only hastened back to Owain; she related what had passed, and prepared the knight for an interview with her mistress. On the day appointed, Owain arrayed himself in a

coat, and a surcoat, and a mantle of yellow satin, —a colour in especial esteem with the ancients, as the old romances portray—and upon the last was a broad band of gold lace; and on his feet he put high shoes of variegated leather, fastened with golden clasps wrought into the form of lions.

"The next day," (after the presentation,) saith the Llyfr Coch, "the countess caused all her subjects to assemble, and showed them that her earldom was left defenceless, and that it could not be protected but with horse and arms, and military skill. 'Therefore,' said she, 'this is what I offer for your choice; either let one of you take me, or give your consent for me to take a husband from elsewhere, to defend my dominions.'"

"So they came to the determination that it was better that she should have permission to marry some one from elsewhere; and thereupon she sent for the bishops and archbishops, to celebrate her nuptials with Owain. And the men of the earldom did Owain homage."

In this narrative, which has been so ably done into English by Lady Guest, and parts of which we have given verbatim to the reader, a characteristic trait of the manners of the times in which it was written is pleasantly set forth. A poor knight, who possessed hardihood and valour, had every chance of fighting his way into the bosom

and territories of any rich heiress or widow whatsoever; for in those days, when "might was right," and the best title-deed was a strong arm, the great solicitude of well-portioned ladies was, to discover a stalwart knight who should preserve their lands from the depredations of their neighbours. Every trivial misunderstanding was settled by the lance and the sword; and he who unhorsed his adversary, possessed himself of his property. Amongst the many advantages of knighthood, as creditably and valorously borne by men of gentle blood, St. Palaye does not omit this as one by which courage and address may come poor into lists, and retire covered with honour, riches, and the love of the fair sex. For, as a lady's possessions were nothing to her unless she could keep them, and as in the plenitude of chivalry and knight-errantry, it was matter of course for her to love and to marry, and as again, owing to the unsettled and troublous state of the times, the man most deserving of love, was the man most capable of defending the weak or delicate from oppression, so it was natural for her to select, independent of any innate or intrinsic virtue, the greatest muscular strength, valour, perseverance, and hardihood, that could centre in one and the same individual; indeed, these external qualifications argued and supposed every mental virtue of which the person of a man could be possessed.

CHAPTER IV.

Ancient Kings of Scotland.—Wars between the Britons, Danes, and Saxons.

The many warlike, famous kings
That reigned o'er parts of Scotland;
They did such fierce and fiery things,
They rendered it a hot land.

After Fingal and his Caledonian warriors defeated Caracalla, as he marshalled his host beneath the wings of the Roman eagle, perpetual hostilities befel savagely between the two nations for several generations of men. It was in the year 211 that the battle, to which we refer, took place. Ossian afterwards, in the palace of Selma,—that stood upon the rock by the water side, and at whose base were the white sands he speaks of, (which, by the way, are *now* brown,) and also, when the wind was favourable, within hearing of the roaring tide that rushed over the rocky ledge of Cona, and within sight of the most ancient castle of Dunstaffnage across Loch Etive,—there sang the deeds of heroes achieved on this bloody field. There, whilst the wilk, brimming with mead, was quaffed by the chiefs, whose spears now leant

against the wall,—there did Ossian strike the harp, and tell how Caracal closed his wings of pride and fled before the hardy sons of Albin.

The northern tribes continued unceasingly to assail the works of Adrian, whenever there was any chance of compassing any good to themselves, or any evil toward their foes; and in these attacks they were repelled by a succession of Roman commanders during two centuries.

After the meteoric Arthur had descended to the grave, like a falling star that shoots from its sphere on high, where it had been the light of the world, then, over those amorous parts lying round about the pleasant shores of the Solway, the fierce spirit of contention took dwelling within the bosoms of men, so that dire and cruel wars set them quarrelling together.

The authentic records of these times are scarce and obscure; the meager fragments of history that have come down to us from certain **ancyent kronykylls** can hardly be accredited; and if it were not for the purer light of tradition, (which is always the truest part of history,) we should be lamentably deficient in all that relates to the sun-rising—the early dawn of Scottish affairs.

The Scoto-Hibernian tribe of the Dalriads from the Green Island, were located in the country of the Epidii, or on that part of Caledonia which is now the western half of Argyleshire; and they

were spreading themselves from this point in radii over the land, much to the annoyance of their neighbours, whose homes they invaded. It is an unpleasant thing to have ones house and home entered by strangers. These colonies were led by the three stalwart sons of Erc, severally ycleped Loarn, Fergus, and Angus, the second of whom (Fergus) being afterwards the progenitor of a long line of kings in Scotland.

Whilst these things were doing amongst the Kelts and Dalriads of the north, the Jutes, Hengist and Horsa, were cutting bull-hides into thongs, after the effeminate yet classic ensample of the lady Dido, and were measuring out land in Thanet, whereon to ensconce themselves. Is it not rational to suppose that the old term of a *hide* of land took its rise from this act of Hengist?

These ealdormen, or chieftains, with their followers, arrived in three keels, or vessels; and Vortigern, "one of the Three Drunkards of Britain," as celebrated in the Triads, sent them cards of invitation, courteously bidding them come and crush a cup of metheglin with him and his family. Rowena and the Þæȝ-Þæl bowl together were irresistible; Hengist married the one, and quaffed the other. The son-in-law then fought the battles of his new sire, and received ample territory in recompense. But it has been well said that, "where much is given, much will be required."

The demands of the strangers increased in proportion to the liberality of the Britons; so that, not content with what had been bestowed on them, they began to clamour for more; and when this more was refused, they got into a passion and tried to snatch it by force. The Jutes even joined with the Picts and Scots, and ravaged the lands of their late entertainers. This course was neither just nor amiable. After divers achievements, smacking rather of war than of love, they established themselves finally in the kingrick of Cantwara Land.

About the same time that the Jutes were conquering Kent, Ella and a pugnacious band of Saxons were locating themselves very unceremoniously in Sussex, then the country of the Regni. They fought with the Britons, and prevailed on them to take flight into the forest of Andreade, as the only practicable mode of keeping their souls and their bodies identified in one and the same individual.

Advices touching these successes appear to have been wafted back to the old Teutons across the eastern sea; for not long after Ella had built his throne, and had been hailed as the first Bretwalda, or Emperor of the Isle of Briton, others of his countrymen followed his course, and settled themselves in Hampshire. This they did not do without a great deal of cutting argument and chop logic with the natives, and Geraint their prince,

who endeavoured in vain, through the rhetoric of swords and hatchets, to talk them down.

Another colony debated cruel war with the men of Essex, led on by the Supreme Lord, or Suzerain, ycleped Æscwin; and in spite of all that the Britons could say to them, in trying to persuade them not to persist in coming, still they were so headstrong that they would.

At this most dreary epocha also, now came over the Angles, angling for territory much in the same way that their ancient neighbours the Jutes and Saxons had done.

So savagely did these tribes demean themselves, but more especially the Saxons, who counted the greatest numbers, spread themselves over the greatest number of hides of land, and committed the most cruelty, that men of letters have, judging by their stern attributes, shrewdly dived into the derivation and origin of the term Saxon. Some say it arose from the word *seax*, the name of the short sword which they always wore, and which they were so fond of using against their enemies; but Higden, as may be seen in the Polycronycon, derives it otherwise. "Men of that cowntree," says he, "ben more lyghter and stronger on the see, than other scommers or theeves of the see, and pursue theyr enemyes fulle harde bothe bye water and bye londe, and been called *Saxones* of *Saxum*, that is, a *stone*, for they ben as harde as stones, and uneasy to fare withe."

The British kingdoms of Deyfyr and Bryneich (latinized into Deira and Bernicia), extending from the Humber to the British Sea, or Firth of Forth, were, according to Palgrave, divided from each other by a forest, occupying the tract between the Tyne and Tees; and which, unreclaimed by man, was abandoned to the wild deer. Properly speaking, he further says, this border-land, now the bishoprick of Durham, does not seem originally to have belonged to either kingdom; but, in subsequent times, the boundary between Deira and Bernicia was usually fixed at the Tyne. The Trans-humbrane countries were much exposed, at an early period, to the attacks of the Jutes and Saxons. The Britons of Strathclyde and Cumbria, whose territory lay on the western side of the country, yet stretched over to those places which these "scommers, or theeves" were invading, aroused themselves and opposed them.

In these wars the natives of Reged, comprising all the district about Annandale, the shores of the Solway, and the Debateable Land, being the scene of our history, and over which the renowned Urien held his sceptre, took active measures to beat back these uncourteous strangers into the ocean from whence they had come. But Urien, the hero of the bards and the subject for song, found in Ida a sturdy foe. This son of Angle-land succeeded in erecting a tower on a

lofty promontory of the coast, which served him at once both for a castle and a palace. The Britons gave it the name of the "Shame of Bernicia," so humiliated did they feel at this act of their enemies. Ida afterwards bestowed it on his queen Bebba, from whom it took the appellation of *Bebban-Burgh*, the burgh or fortress of Bebba; and thence became abbreviated into Bamborough.

The separate states of Deira and Bernicia, governed for a series of years by Ella or Ida and his descendants, who traced back their genealogy to Woden, were at last united into the one sole and independent kingdom of Northumbria. Against these the old dwellers of Reged and Cumbria fought frequent and fierce battles. The natural boundary that separated them from each other, was the ridge of mountains running north and south through the island, which has oft-times been called the British Apennines. These mountains, in this part of modern England, then served the original possessors of the soil in good stead against the encroachments of the new comers, even as the mountains of Wales protected their brethren from the men of Merkenricke or Mercia. It is true, these obstacles, in both cases, were finally surmounted and passed; but they opposed a barrier so formidable, not only from their height and ruggedness, but also from the morasses with

which they abounded, and from the shelter which their crags, glens, and fastnesses gave to the besieged, that several centuries elapsed before the Saxons could penetrate so far as their western sides.

The Gododin, an ancient Welsh poem by a contemporary bard, tells, in piteous language, of the fierce encounters that befel between the natives and the Teutons, who had come to molest them. The Danes were, perhaps, the most restless, pertinacious, and turbulent of all the various invaders of Lloegr: they had succeeded in planting themselves in the northern parts of England (according to modern appellation); but no sooner found themselves rooted there so firmly as to be without fear of eradication by those whom they had dispossessed, than they set out upon new conquests, and pierced far into the states of Cumbria, Reged, Strathclwyde, Pictavia, and the Scots' land. Under the command of Halfdane, they spoiled all the churches and monasteries of the sometime converted occupiers of the soil; and they devastated the territories pertaining to the see of St. Cuthbert, which comprised, besides that region about the ancient forest stretching between the Tees and Tyne, the city of Carlisle and a tract of country measuring twelve miles around it, including Gretna.

During these transactions a continual predatory warfare was kept up between them and the pre-

vious habitants; who, by the way, were often Saxons, who had, a century or two before, invaded the Britons, even as the Danskers were invading them. In such countless swarms did they at last infest the land, and so ubiquitous did they appear, owing to their numbers and the celerity of their movements, that the terrified and wonder-stricken English used to exclaim, "If thirty thousand are slain in one day, there will be double that number in the field on the morrow."

The Scandinavian pirates had acquired so much fierceness and activity, and these united qualities, blending with an insatiable cruelty and passion for murder, had brought them so many victories, that nothing now appeared likely to stop their career until they should absolutely subjugate the whole of Europe. Such a vast design seems actually to have been planned by them. They not merely overran Great Britain, now so called, and the lesser islands pertaining thereto, but they landed on the shores of France, and boldly carried hostility into the very heart of the country, and even steered their long ships across the Bay of Biscay, coasted Portugal, and sailed into the Mediterranean by the Pillars of Hercules.

It was Scandinavian Heathenism against all Christendom. Not a monarch in Europe but trembled for his throne. It was a kind of common cause; and, if they were defeated in one end of

Europe, the other end rejoiced. Thus it is that, when the Scots encountered the Northmen and overthrew them in a fierce battle, Charlemagne, in a distant region, and reigning over another country having no connexion with Scotland, felt that the Scots had done him a service by checking the progress of the common enemies of one great portion of the world. We believe that it was in grateful acknowledgment for this good deed that he professed himself and his successors to be ever the friendly allies of the Scots, to be their faithful reliance and their protection; and, in everduring token whereof, the double tressure drawn round about the lion on the shield of this kingdom was added, an heraldic symbol typifying that France, under the badge of the Fleur-de-lis, united by bands round the Lion, should be the protector of Scotland.

It is a pleasant thing if we can, in serving ourselves, also at the same time serve our neighbours. In fighting this battle-field, the Scots certainly were intent upon serving themselves; but such fair service did they do their brother monarchs in the distant neighbourhood, that the thanks of all Europe, as well as those of Charlemagne, poured in upon them.

The descendants of the Romanized Britons, occupying what was originally the lands of the Ottadini, Selgovæ, Gadeni, the Damnii of Clydes-

dale, and of the Novantes of Galloway, long maintained themselves independent of their Anglo-Saxon oppressors; that is, in so far as this, that, although they suffered defeat and persecution from them at detached periods too often repeated, still, through tact in retiring from them amongst the wilder regions of Valencia, as this Roman province was called, or in wisely shunning pitched battles when they perceived the foe to be too strong for them, they kept themselves a separate people, devoted to their own laws, and governed by their own Pendragon.

The province of Valencia, during the supremacy of the Roman power, comprised all that territory enclosed between the Wall of Lollius Urbicus on the north, stretching from the Firth of Clyde to the Pictish Sea, and the works of Severus on the south, running from Solway Firth to the Tyne.

The aborigines, now partly Romanized through intercourse with their first conquerors, still continued to be the prevailing people. Their individuality was first weakened when the Teutons became masters of their eastern districts of Bernicia, since called Berwickshire, Lothian, &c., and compelled them to the adoption of new customs and new institutions. They pushed their conquests northwards to the foot of the Grampians, and are supposed to have been the founders of the city of Edinburgh. It is more than probable that

the Britons had long had a *dun*, or fortress, on the commanding and isolated rock now occupied by the castle, as such an advantageous position could scarcely have been overlooked; but the name of *Edwin's Burgh*, or, as called by the contemporary Britons, *Dun-Edin*, clearly points out the fact, that the Saxons under Edwin gave name, and also consideration, strength, and power, to this place.

Their seaxes opened a way for them westward; and they warred inveterately with the natives, whom they had for the most part cooped up in the wildernesses of Reged and Galloway, and hesitated not to pass the Catrail, a remarkable trench running north and south through those parts as a boundary, and in some sort resembling the Dyke of Offa, constructed to separate Mercia from Wales.

Contemporary with Alfred of England, reigned Gregory, surnamed the Great, over the turbulent vassals of the Lowlands. He fought hard against the Danes, and, in return, the Danes fought hard against him; but it is rational to conclude that he, nevertheless, fought the hardest, and for this reason, to wit,—he conquered them, and put a multitude to the sword.

He then turned his seaxes against the Cumbrians, who, being mostly Picts, were at that actual time in alliance with his foes. He overcame them, and they promised never to be so naughty again: but Constantine the Pendragon

soon forgot his promise, and dared to invade Annandale. Gregory followed him — came up with him at Lochmaben near Springfield—fought with him—and slew him there by the margins of the four lakes.

To these invaders the Lowlanders probably owe the Scoto-Saxon language as existing amongst them since that period.

It is remarkable, observes Sir Walter Scott, that the obscure contests of the Britons and Saxons yet survive in traditional song. For this we have to thank the institution of the Bards, the second rank of the Druids, and partaking of their sacred character.

This order survived the fall of Druidism, and continued to perpetuate whilst it exaggerated the praises of the British chieftains, who continued to fight in defence of the Cumbrian kingdom of Reged, and the more northern district of Strath-Clwyde.

The chief of these Bards, of whom we still possess the lays in the ancient British language, are Taliessin, Merlin of Caledonia, Aneurin, and Llywarch Hen. The two last appear to have been princes; and, contrary to the original rules of their order, they, as well as Merlin, were warriors.

Urien of Reged, the shores of whose kingdom were washed by the waters of the Solway and the

Sark, and his son Owain, of whom we have made mention, were much-loved matter of song; and Llywarch Hen had the advantage of witnessing the valorous deeds achieved in the morning by the light of the sun, which at evening he chaunted by the light of lamps and torches.

These native princes, however, do certainly appear to have maintained a long struggle with the Saxons, which was frequently successful, and might have been eventually so, had not the remains of the provincial Britons been divided into two petty kingdoms, of Cumbria and Strath-Clwyde, and those tribes of warriors frequently distracted by disunion among themselves. As it was, they finally lost their independence; for no kingdom, any more than a house, can stand when it is divided against itself.

The last king of the Cumbrian Britons, called Dunmail, was slain in a contest nigh unto Ambleside, on the waters of Winandermere, where a hugeous cairn or barrow, raised *ad ejus et rei memoriam*, is still called Dunmail-Raise; and his country was ceded to Scotland by the conqueror Edward, in 945.

Strath-Clwyde, sometimes resisting and sometimes submitting, maintained a precarious independence until about 975, when Dunwallon, the last independent monarch of the northern Britons, was defeated by Kenneth III., King of the Scots,

and is said to have buried himself, his mishaps and his shame, within the privity of a cloister's walls.

Upon the death of Alfred, the succession devolved upon his son Edward, ycleped the Elder, and upon Ethelwald his first cousin. Divers uncousinly contentions ensued betwixt these relations as to who should finally enjoy the sovereignty; and, had not death arrested Ethelwald in the midst of his career, widows and orphans would have abounded in England.

Edward now entered upon the dominion of the greater part of the island, with the reservation of certain lesser governments appertaining to his sister, Ethelfleda, "the Lady of Mercia." This heroine was the Boadicea—the Semiramis—the Zenobia of that day: she ruled with penetration and sagacity, and she acted with promptitude and effect. Victory followed her steps, and power supported her throne. But she died. She left her kingdom—or rather queendom—to her daughter Elfwina; for the Salique law had no part with the Saxons, but the authority was allowed to "fall by the spindle side," that is, through the female line.

After a while some misunderstanding arose, and Elfwina was captured by her uncle Edward: he conducted her into Mercia, and from that time we get no tidings of her. Peradventure there was foul play.

Edward's territories were now still further extended, and his puissance became irresistible. He overcame many fierce Holdas of the Danes, who had been teasing him for a course of years with invasion, herriment, and plunder; he fortified certain burgs of his kingdom, that he might strengthen himself and terrify his foes; and he secured the affections, or at all events the fears or wills of his people, by crafty policy and prudent administration.

Such was the dread in which he was held, that princes who would gladly have driven their chariot-wheels over his neck, if so be they could, fulsomely came forward with flattery, and craved his alliance. By alliance, howbeit, Edward understood submission. To submission, moreover, were they obliged to stoop; his strongholds, his comparative wealth, and his forces in the field, compelled them to it, whatever their preference might have been.

Within the closure of the "timbered," or palisaded, burg of Witham in Essex did the people flock to tender their allegiance. The towns of Northampton and Bedford followed the example; and then, with many wry mouths, came Colchester and Malden. After that, all the Dansker Holdas of the eastern possessions submitted in the same way, as a course not easily to be eschewed. Mercia was equally obedient, that had

some time been hostile; Ethelfleda's subjects "turned to him" and acknowledged him their sovereign, besides certain of the kingdoms of the Heptarchy.

These successes superinduced others. All the kings of the Britons—Howel Dda, Cledauc, Edwall,—became Edward's liege men, and rendered him homage, together with their vassals. North of the Humber it was just the same; the Danes and the Angles swore fealty, never to serve any other prince but only him.

Last of all, let us turn to the theme of our history: the men of Gretna Green, in the district of Reged, in the British kingdom of Strath-Clwyde, accepted him as their "Father, Lord, and Protector;" and the princes of Galloway, of Cumbria, and the King of the Scots, along with all their people, threw up their caps and cried "Long life to Edward!"

About the year 925, after a brilliant reign, Edward fought his last battle: he wrestled with death, and was thrown. Athelstane, his son, succeeded to the globe and sceptre.

Albeit the Britons had acknowledged the two former Saxon kings their sovereign lords, they now, in this reign, tried to regain their independence; and to that end they arose to assert their ancient rights. But Athelstane arose too. The end of this rising was, that one side or the

other must be put down. Verily the seax, which the Teutons had imported along with themselves from the shores of the Baltic, soon persuaded the Kelts to give in; furthermore, they were necessitated to pay a yearly tribute of much precious metal into the "hoard," or treasury, of the King of London. All the Cymri of the north—and the vellum chronicles especially make mention of those who dwelt by the waters of the Solway—were compelled into submission to the domination of this fair-haired interloper, besides succumbing to the vice-regency of his various Jarls and Heah-Gerefas.

In process of time the Gothic languages began to spread themselves over the kingricks of Valencia; the Scots and Picts, amalgamated into one people, assuming the former name: but we are told that Reged, for many lunar cycles, maintained its original Kimbric purity unmixed or sophisticated, and that this purity, in the remote regions of Galloway, was still more marked and more enduring. This is not so much matter of marvel when we recollect that in Wales, to which nook of the ancient British nation Urien of Reged was enforced to slink away from his ravishers, the language there had survived through all vicissitudes in prevalence and purity for nearly a thousand years. As it was in Wales, so it was in Gal-

loway, — the aborigines were driven westward, even until the breakers of the Atlantic dashed over their ankles: here they made a stand; and the last traces of their identity are not obliterated yet.

CHAPTER V.

Downfall of the Saxons, and establishment of the Norman ascendancy.—Battle between the English and Scoto-Saxons.

A chronicle of matters done,
Which toil and trouble cost;
The records of a battle won,
And eke a battle lost.

Albeit the Pendragon of Albin had been brought to do homage to the Basileus and Bretwalda of the South country for the provinces of Lothian and the Merse, a counterpoise, by way of generous gag, was given him in the districts round about the Debateable Land and Carlisle in Cumberland, ceded to Malcolm I. The south-western frontier of Scotland was very much extended beyond the Wall of Severus; whilst the eastern boundary was contracted so far north as the waters of the Scots' Sea, otherwise called the Firth of Forth. That the English monarch should have been so generous to his brother, in thus yielding up Cumberland, may appear strange

at first sight, especially when we remember that in those lawless days men battened, not upon honest labour, but rather upon plunder; but, if we may credit historiographers who have noted this transfer, it should seem that the liberal donor made a virtue of necessity, since he magnanimously bestowed on his neighbour that which he could not well keep unto himself.

The cause of the cession is obvious, says Sir Walter Scott. In exemplification of this he remarks, that the people of Cumberland were of the same race and manners with those of the Britons of Strath-Clwyde who occupied the opposite frontier; and Edmund, who retained but a doubtful sovereignty over Northumberland, would have been still more embarrassed by the necessity of retaining, by garrisons or otherwise, so wild and mountainous a country as British Reged.

By yielding it to Malcolm, he secured a powerful ally, capable of protecting the western frontier of Northumberland, and to whose domination the Cumbrians might be the more readily disposed to submit, as it united them with their brethren of Strath-Clwyde.

With the uncivil wars between Duncan I. who came to the throne in 1034, and Macbeth, Macduff, and certain others, we have nothing to do, as the arena of their broils did not lie nigh the waters of the Solway,—the subject of our dis-

quisitions. Pity it is that they had not occasion to come into these pleasant parts, and inhale the amorous breezes that ever blew over them; as, if they had, it is possible that the balmy influence of this atmosphere would have suddenly changed the tenor of their bosoms, and have set them hugging, kissing, and caressing each other, quite as hard as they had been before fighting.

William of Normandy, some time after the victory of Hastings, pressed his conquests northward on the island, and wrenched from Malcolm Cean-More, or Great Head, all that part of the western border which had, a few years before, been given up, as we have remarked.

William was the most formidable adversary that any Scotch king had ever, up to this time, had to contend with; for he not only may be considered as possessed of a greater degree of civilization than these rude northerners, and better skilled in the regular discipline of troops, but he had the force of Normandy, as well as the force of England, at his command.

Malcolm's great head, howbeit, was not empty of brains; and by the help of these brains he planned and prosecuted a most vigorous invasion into England, as a set-off against William.

The English king had been sorely tyrannizing over his new subjects, so that in Northumberland he found them rather disposed to favour his antago-

nist than himself. With this county he was obliged to purchase the allegiance of Gospatric, on condition that the said Gospatric should assist him against the Scots. This was agreed to, and Cumberland was ravaged accordingly.

In 1071, William was summoned to quell an insurrection in Wales; and, whilst busied cutting men's throats there, Malcolm took the opportunity of mincing William's people on the borders, notwithstanding that the chroniclers say he did not mince the matter at all.

Malcolm marched his men through Gretna Green, and a wonder it was the amorous atmosphere did not soften his heart—it is supposed he held his breath all the time, and would not inhale it. He crossed the Sark and the Debateable Land; he pressed onward with vast expediency and haste, using infinite cruelty wherever he came, and, at a place ycleped *Hundreds-keld*, he massacred divers English noblemen and all their company. He then "veered hys mayne sheete," as Spencer saith, and steered away into Yorkshire: here he slew, plundered, and enslaved; despatching his booty away into Scotland as he took it. When this was done, he marched upon Durham: he pillaged the bishopric, and burnt the sacred edifices to the ground.

But Gospatric was again in motion. Whilst the great-headed king was doing these evil deeds near the eastern seas, Gospatric, on the part of

William, hied away towards Carlisle to rifle all the regions adjacent: this he did to admiration, until Malcolm followed him, burning with wrath, and swearing that the laws of the land should be put in full force against this enemy.

And, verily, the established law of that day was put in full force against him,—to wit, the *lex talionis*, or Law of Tit-for-Tat; for the Scotch king came up with him and debated fierce battle with him, using swords and spears rather than words,—an argument so sharp, as soon talked down Gospatric, and obliged him to fly away hastily.

Malcolm then returned in triumph over the border, and espoused the Saxon princess Margaret, a lady famed for every virtue.

Very little difference has existed since Stephen's reign with respect to the position of the border line, if we always except the Debateable Land, which was continually a matter of dispute. Carlisle, which naturally pointed out the western extremity of the line, owing to its being the principal stronghold in the vicinage, had been carefully repaired by William before his death, as it had continued in a state of dilapidation ever since the Danes had pillaged it, two hundred years previously. This act gave great offence to Malcolm Cean-More, since he thought that, as it lay within the limits of his feudal dominions, it was a breach of the late treaty, and an intrusion which

he had no right to make. His fief, or feud, for which he did homage, he looked upon in the same light in which a modern tenant looks upon his land for which he pays rent to his landlord; to wit, that, as long as he pays his rent, (or did homage, which was only another way of paying it,) that land, or territory, or fief, was his own,—even free from the domination or interference of the superior. When William, therefore, came to Carlisle, and strengthened it with massy walls and towers, the Scottish monarch was perplexed with various doubts as to the object of such fortification: he thought it an undue intrusion, to say the least of it; and he did not at all relish the restraint that a numerous Norman garrison, placed therein, imposed upon him. In fine, he did not like to have the Conqueror of England and his soldiers so near to him.

Being a little whit techy at the proceeding, he hastened southward to Gloucester, where William then held his court, in order to make complaint in person: but the haughty son of Rollo would not admit him entrance, unless he should, on this present occasion, now go through the humiliating ceremony of swearing fealty. Malcolm, peradventure fearful of treachery, being so far from his own kingdom, refused; but he said he would do homage as had ever been the custom heretofore, that is, on the borders. As this was not agreed

to, Malcolm returned to Scotland and prepared for war.

Carlisle was consequently left *in statu quo*; which, being rendered into the vulgar tongue, signifieth, with a Norman garrison in it.

Stephen found matters in this state, and the frontier line terminating at this point.

Whilst these matters were in debate, other things of importance were in progression. Substantial changes had taken place, both in the interior of South and North Britain, and had amalgamated these two grand divisions of the island, each into one great kingdom; so that the regions where they had hitherto bordered on each other, ceasing to be the residence of independent or tributary states, assumed the character of frontiers, or, as we now term them, says Sir Walter Scott, of borders.

William was prodigal in gifts of territory to his barons and lesser chivalry, that shared the hazardry of Hastings' fight along with him; and several of his followers had grants of land along the line of which we speak. Some ancient minstrel has sung this sequent couplet of him, when discoursing of his large gifts of honour and estate:

> "Dona chastels, dona titez,
> Dona terres as vavarssors."

This notable fact of the consolidation of England and Scotland, each into one separate monarchy, and wholly unfettered as regarded the other, took

place nearly about the same time. At least, albeit the consolidation of England, as a kingdom, was achieved somewhat earlier than the settlement of Scotland, when the Heptarchy states were all united under one diadem, still the distractions, occasioned by Danish invasions and civil wars, prevented her extending her empire over her northern neighbours. Indeed, the power of England could scarce be said to be wielded by one sovereign with uncontrolled sway until William the Conqueror had repressed the various insurrections of the Saxons; subjugated for ever the tumultuary Northumbrians, who, for several centuries, had been the noted disturbers of that district; and had acquired a consolidated force capable of menacing the kingdom of Scotland. Had such an event befallen a century earlier, it is probable that all Britain would, at that remote era, have been compelled by one single sceptre. On the other hand, if peradventure a Scottish monarch had existed during the Heptarchy as puissant and as capable of great works as Canmore in aftertimes, it is fair to say that he, most likely, would have pushed his conquests much further south than the present borders, and would have possibly secured to Scotland all the countries north of the Humber.

Fate, however, had so balanced the power, by making two equally astute kings contemporaneous, and equalities were so balanced between them,

that curiosity in neither could make choice of either's moiety,—a state of affairs that served to settle the boundary, even where it has almost invariably ever since remained.

The orb of Saxon ascendancy now set, never to reappear; whilst the sun of Norman dominion arose.

Except the massy ecclesiastical edifices of the Heptarchy, few traces of the architecture of that period remain on the border. The Saxon houses, even of the princes, were for the most part built of wood; and their military system consisted rather in giving battle in the open field, than in attacking or defending places of strength. They may have surrounded their towns with a rude circumvallation of earth, or such material as the spot afforded; but they had no turreted castles on the border like those which arose so numerously soon after, and especially in the reign of Stephen, and perhaps none elsewhere. Conings-burg Castle, near Sheffield, is, by some antiquaries, supposed to be of Saxon origin, and even, as is further asserted, built on the site of the tumulus of Hengist.

Coins, cups, and drinking-horns, of Saxon and Danish manufacture, have from time to time been dug up on the frontiers, but the occasions were rare.

Up to the conquest of England by the Duke of Normandy's ill-gotten son, and for a long time subsequently, the border feuds, which raged so

fiercely afterwards, can scarcely be said to have arisen. It was enough for the monarchs on both sides of the line to busy themselves in consolidating their own authority over so many various tribes, as Britons, Saxons, Danes, and Normans, without turning their attentions to the annoyance of each other, unless when such annoyance tended to the end in view. During this early period, therefore, the edifices of devotion, as churches, monasteries, and the like, arose the more frequently, that the good understanding between the two countries was only interrupted by occasional and brief wars, bearing little the character of inveterate hostility, such as subsequently existed between them, even in the piping time of peace.

The subjects that peopled the Scottish side of the frontier were as heterogeneous in extraction as those on the opposite side, and quite as impatient of control. The Scots and Picts had ever been picking quarrels with each other; but now, at the time of which we speak, videlicet, towards the close of the eleventh century, they had melted down into one people, bearing the former name. The Scoto-Britons of Reged, around the margin of the Firth of Solway, struggled hard for independence, which although they lost, they still retained their individuality. This was more the case with the people of Galloway, who, lying more remote from the authority of the kings of

Scotland, gave them apparently no more obedience than that which was formerly yielded by the British tribes to the Pendragon.

In his Essay on Border Antiquities, to which we are much indebted, Sir Walter Scott tells us that the northern division of Bernicia, extending over towards the confines of the kingdom of Strath-Clwyde, was inhabited by a numerous population of Scoto-Saxons; being the descendants of those tribes that had partly colonized the district, and partly had fled out of Northumberland to eschew the ravages, first of the Danes, and secondly of the Franks.

Thus, it will be seen, that both the king of the north country, as well as the king of the south country, were possessed of a heterogeneous comminglement of blood amongst their subjects, that but ill-consorted with peace, order, or unanimity.

Now, about this time a savage fight between the two kingdoms was debated. David, the then king of the north, took part with the Empress Maude, his niece, against the pretensions of Stephen. He had already chastised Stephen at Roxburgh, forcing him to hie away off the field as one who did not prosper in the strife; but now, the year after, he entered England with a powerful army, and met his foes, who nevertheless were much more powerful than he, at a place ycleped Culton Moor. His army was composed

of the inhabitants of Galloway near the western frontiers, placed in the van, along with the men of Carric, Kyle, Cunningham, and Renfrew; in the second line came the Lodeneses, or dwellers in Lothian; then the irregularly disciplined clans from the mountains, commanded by their own maormors or chiefs, who would fight like bull-dogs for booty, which, when obtained, they were impatient to carry immediately home.

The front line of the English army was intermixed with archers; and the horsemen, saving a body of cavalry as a reserve at some distance, dismounted down from their steeds, that they might shun the long lances which the first line of the Scots bore. The English had with them their most famous standard, wherein they placed an infinitude of faith and confidence as a certain palladium against the puissance of their foes. They looked upon it much in the same light in which most ancient, and, to say the truth, barbarous or superstitious nations, looked upon their standards; which, through the cunning of their chiefs, were generally declared to have been the gift of heaven, or else blessed in some peculiar way, so as to render them magical and invincible. Thus, the Romans found the early Caledonians fighting under an ensign of war called the Sun-Beam, which had been transmitted to them by Fyn Mac Cowl;—and the Romans themselves

looked with a supernatural reverence upon the legionary eagle: the Lochlyns and Danskers reared up a banner emblazoned with a hugeous raven, the name of which was *Reafen:* the Saxons, under Hengist, carried the white horse; perhaps in compliment to their leader, whose name means stallion: and the men of Wessex carried a golden dragon before them.

The English standard, to which we refer, was a ponderous and unwieldy machine: the body of it was a kind of box mounted upon wheels, so as to render it locomotive; and from the centre of this box was reared the lofty mast of a ship, surmounted by a glittering silver cross; and around this last were displayed, fluttering in the breezes, the gorgeous banners of St. Peter, St. John de Beverly, and St. Wilfred. Conspicuous rallying points, such as this served for, were in use all over the Continent of Europe about the eleventh century.

If such an apparatus would make men fight, why, let them use it, and the desire of their commanders and of their country is fulfilled. He who infused his soldiers with a superstitious pride, in tutoring them to defend this machine against their foes, (and consequently, if not ostensibly, to defend themselves at the same time,) instilled a hyper-natural strength into their arms, and a hyper-ordinary courage into their hearts; and

thus, by such a practice, victories followed. But, take away all the mysticism from the box upon wheels, the mast, and the flags, and then, for all the good it would do the army, it might as well have been put into the fire.

Men do not know their real powers until they have occasion to put them forth in critical positions; and the plan adopted in the dark ages (and it will even succeed in the enlightened ones) was to work upon the powers of their pseudo-faith, namely, their superstition. The pride of preserving their badge unviolated, and the idea of shame attached to any injury which might befall it alighting on themselves in condemnation, braced them with new nerves, and inspirited them with energies scarcely their own.

But the battle began, and the onslaught was fierce. The English rushed upon the van of the Scots; and so vigorous was the charge, that the latter were enforced to give ground. They were unwittingly driven back upon the centre, where David commanded in *propriâ personâ* very improperly—improperly, because his commands, as issued to his men, failed in making them obey as he directed, that is, in cutting his enemies to bits. In fine, they disobeyed his orders: he told them to gain him the victory, but they did not. Seeing confusion spread amongst the ranks, seeing the cool discipline of his army broken in upon,

and seeing the front line falling back upon him as the Southrons advanced, he found it expedient to see what was next to be done. Having seen into this, without looking far so to do, and being resolved that to contend any longer would be but false valour, he decided upon embracing that truest part of valour designated discretion. His doughty son had hit hard with his metal brand all who were not for him; and he himself had vehemently insisted that his soldiers should conquer or—give in. This was all vanity in the commencement of the action, and vexation of spirit attended on the end.

Giving up the day for lost, he turned about his horse's head, and hastily retreated, with part of his shattered forces, towards Carlisle city, where he immured himself peevishly within the walls of the castelet.

Historiographers write that he lost ten thousand men on this occasion; but this is doubted by some readers, as it is known that the English did not think they had done so much as to instigate them to pursuit, and we furthermore find that the Scots were able to renew the war next year. Howbeit, not long after, a peace was concluded betwixt the two kingdoms; and Prince Henry, the same who had hit all opposers so hard with his metal brand during the late battle, was enfeoffed with Huntingdon and Northumberland,

on condition that he should do service to Stephen for them.

David continued the friend of his niece, the Lady Empress Maude, even so long as his spirit continued to inhabit his earthly clay; but, after he had reigned more than twenty-nine years, the said spirit bid him adieu at Carlisle, and went aloft.

CHAPTER VI.

State of Scotland at the death of Alexander III.—Voyage of Sir Patric Spens.—Competitors for the Crown of Scotland.—Siege of Carlisle.—Heroism of the Women in the Castle.

Here may ye read of deeds begun,
And by great men achiev'd:
And glorious things by women done,
Full hard to be believ'd.

NEVER were the prospects of any country in so deplorable a condition as those of Scotland on the unlooked-for death of Alexander III. in 1285.

This king had married, not at Gretna, the sister of Edward I. of England, and probably inherited, after a period of nearly eight hundred years, and through a long succession of males, the sceptres of all the Scottish princes that had governed the nation since its first establishment in the island.

He left no sons to succeed him in the kingdom; and his only daughter, Margaret, was the wife of Eric, King of Norway. These two had a daugh-

ter, also called Margaret; and this grandchild of Alexander now became sole heir to his crown.

Albeit a female, a foreigner, and an infant, still, owing to the wise and precautionary measures of her grandfather in settling the succession, she had been duly recognized by the states; so that, when his demise became known, no rebellious disorders ensued, as might have been expected, and as was ordinarily the case. She was universally confessed to be the rightful Queen of Scotland; and six noblemen peaceably entered upon the administration of affairs, *pendente ejus ingressu*. Eric her father, and Edward her great-uncle, also interested themselves in her favour, whereby she seemed firmly and happily seated upon the Coronation Stone ere she had crossed the seas to her new kingdom.

The ambition of the English monarch led him to negotiate a marriage between this youthful "Maid of Norway," as she was termed, and his eldest son, Edward Prince of Wales; and as the animosities which in after-times raged so bitterly between the two countries had not then arisen, but, on the contrary, as a friendly understanding subsisted between them, the design of uniting the whole island under one sovereignty was eagerly embraced by all parties; the Scotch even agreeing that Margaret should be educated at the court of Edward.

The two nations inter-transacted these matters on the most perfect footing of equality: numerous items of agreement were proposed and granted on both sides: a long list of articles, touching the privileges of Scotland, was made out without difficulty or objection: and Edward stipulated to forfeit 100,000 merks to his holiness the pope for the prosecution of the crusades, in case he should not abide by the parchment.

When, after some delay, owing to sending several times to Norway, everything had been arranged to satisfaction, and Sir Patric Spens had sailed for the joyful purpose of fetching the infant queen, the astounding intelligence arrived that she had died somewhat suddenly.

Never did such a piteous stroke fall upon a nation since the world was inhabited by the race of Adam, and Nimrod founded the first monarchy.

We owe very little to Scottish history for the particulars of the grievous voyage of Sir Patric Spens, but rather derive our knowledge from the more authentic source of an unerring tradition, and, as we have said before, we uniformly contend that tradition is ever the truest part of history. "I find no traces of the disaster in Scottish history," observes Sir Walter of Abbotsford; "but, when we consider the meagre materials whence Scottish history is drawn, this is no conclusive argument against the truth of the tradition."

To this opinion we must all readily agree, and consider the grand (though rude) metrical romance detailing the expedition as a connecting link in the historical chain of those times.

Sir Patric put to sea on the Monday morning, albeit the season of the year was so tempestuous as to create no small misgivings in the sailor hearts of those who went with him. Such was the terror entertained for navigating the north seas in winter, owing to the frequent disasters that befel in that early condition of shipbuilding, and science in nautical affairs, that the parliament enacted, in the reign of James III., that no ship should be fraughted out of the kingdom, with any staple goods, betwixt the feast of St. Simon's day and Jude, and Candlemas.

However, "to Noroway o'er the foam" was their embassage; and "be it wind, be it wet, be it hail, be it sleet," away they must go to fetch the king of Noroway's daughter.

They hoisted their swelling sails on the Monday morning, as we said; and it should appear that they had a fair, though boisterous, passage, for they had crossed the German Ocean and reached their destination by the Wednesday.

They had not been in port a week, when the Norwegian barons began to get impatient of their stay; wherefore they commenced an unamiable course of annoyance on them, by taxing them with

spending Eric's cash, and consuming the substance of Margaret's fee, by their requisites there in banquets and good harbourage on shore.

This charge they indignantly repelled in ungentle terms, such as, "Ye lie, ye lie, ye liars loud!" But they adduced a better argument than abuse; for they declared that, so far from consuming the riches of the country, they had brought over in the ship with them as much white money as would suffice for the needments of them all, as also the eighth part of a peck of gold.

Yet, after this inhospitable compliment, they felt themselves no longer welcome, but that their room would be as acceptable as their company; so Sir Patric issued his commands that they would sail next morning for Scotland. To do this one of his lieutenants was passing loth, from certain prognostications of foul weather and pitiful luck. "Alack, my dear master," said he, "I fear a deadly storm. I saw the new moon, late yestre'en, with the old moon in her arms; and, if we put to sea, I dread lest evil betide us."

These forebodings, however, were only laughed at as trivial, and were soon overruled or persuaded away; so that every preparation was made, the sails let go to the wind, the anchor tilted, the hawsers cast off; and the queen being on board, together with a courtly assemblage of nobles, they all left the port, and stood out to sea.

Now prepare thine eyes to weep! for the hope of three nations upon the yesty brine in swaddling-clothes is to be engulfed till she sinks to the sandy bottom, there to be made—food for crabs.

They had barely made a good offing from the land, when the sky grew heavy and dark, the wind became gusty and freshening into a gale, and the sea began to run fearfully high; the anchors were hit away from the ship's bows, the topmasts were sprung by the violence of her pitching over a head-swell, and every wave that struck her forward swept her decks from one end to the other.

The man at the wheel (or simple helm, peradventure,) gave his place up to an able seaman, whilst he went aloft to try and get a sight of land; but the change had scarcely been made, when she was struck so severely, owing, like enough, to the helmsman letting her fall off a point from the wind, that her timbers shivered throughout her whole length, and a bolt, or plank (for it is not quite certain), started from her side, so that the water rushed into her like a flood.

In this emergency they resorted to a plan which is still in usage in like cases of springing a leak, or of getting a shot through a ship's side below the water-line; only that, instead of drawing a mat or quilted sail under her bottom and over the spot, they were enforced to employ "a web of silken cloth." But every exertion proved unavailing.

The leak gained upon them, and grievous was their plight.

They seem never to have put about and run before the wind back for Norway; but to have perseveringly held on their way homeward, despite a head-wind and head-sea against them.

We are amusingly told how troubled the Scotch lords were that the water should wet their cork-heeled shoes; but that, long ere the tragedy had been fully enacted, not only their shoes, but the very crowns of their hats likewise, were soaked with the salt spray.

They went down in fifty fathoms' water when they had got so near their native country as fifty miles off Aberdeen: the ship foundered and went to pieces; the feather-beds of the floating nobility (and they were rare articles of luxury in those days) danced about upon the foam; whilst Sir Patric Spens found a resting-place on the pebbles and sand, along with his companions in misadventure, where their bones have become a rich bed of white coral.

Nothing could exceed the bewailment of universal Scotland when these woful tidings landed upon that coast and journeyed over the face of the country; we are assured that the ladies wrung their white hands, and tore their black hair, for the loss of their true loves whom they were doomed never again to see: but more important effects

than these so lamentable were about to accrue to the kingdom at large, owing to the untimely death of Margaret the queen. To these let us turn.

This infant princess had been the sole and last heir of that King William I. who was taken prisoner by Henry II. of England before Alnwick, and, therefore, the succession now devolved upon the issue of David, Earl of Huntingdon, his brother; whose male line being also extinct, left the succession open to the posterity of his daughters. These daughters were three: the eldest married Alan, Lord of Galloway; the second married Robert Bruce, Lord of Annandale; and the third condescended to Henry, Lord Hastings, an English nobleman. The eldest left one daughter, wedded to John Baliol, who, by her, had a son who now started up as a competitor for the vacant crown,—and it will be seen that he is the heir of the eldest branch; the second had a son (Robert Bruce), also a competitor; and the third had a son, who likewise contended for—anything he could get.

When this last had been driven from the field, Baliol and Bruce strove for the sovereignty: the former basing his right on being descended of the elder daughter, though he was her grandson; whilst the latter urged his claim on being only the son, albeit of the second daughter, and, as he insisted, one degree nearer to the common stock.

According to modern ideas of succession, Baliol was the rightful heir,—we holding it that the grandson of the oldest branch has priority of claim over the son of the second. In those days, notwithstanding, men's minds were not clearly settled and satisfied on this point, and hence arose two powerful factions in Scotland, that lacerated that nation from Gretna to John-o'-Groat's House.

In this dilemma, with the sword of civil war hanging over their heads bare and keen, they resolved to refer their perplexities to the arbitrament of Edward, in the hope that his mediation might avert the ruin that threatened them.

This was just what he wanted.

Even before the voyage of Sir Patric Spens, and the death of the Maid of Norway, he seems to have been fully prepared for anything that might happen; wherefore, when the bishop of St. Andrew's and the other deputies presented themselves and their troubles before him, he entered upon an adjustment of the succession with a readiness and confidence truly admirable.

The opportunity that now opened itself upon the English monarch, was too tempting for his virtue to withstand: he was like many other men of the world—he could resist any desire so long as temptation was out of his way; but, when allured to evil, he fell as most others do. He thought he had now a chance of renewing, if

not creating, an ancient claim of feudal superiority over the northern half of the island, which some of the early kings of England had tried to establish;—a claim which had long lain in utter obscurity, and which, if it had ever been an object of attention, or in the least remembered or suspected, would have effectually prevented the Scotch barons from selecting Edward for their umpire.

Although this claim to the entire sovereignty, which was purposed to bring the whole island under one sceptre, was pre-eminently unjust at this juncture, it was one that offered immense advantages to his own kingdom, and might indeed have tended to the real amelioration of Scotland at that distant day: but, without looking into the abstract merits of the affair, he had all the old monasteries ransacked for fusty chronicles writ by his own countrymen; and any passages therein occurring, which might be construed to his advantage, he seized upon as proofs of his dominion over that kingdom, and as of his being hereditarily the superior liege lord over its kings, his feudal vassals. This was letting in a new light upon the Scotchmen.

Astounded as they now were at the fatal mistake they had made in the choice of an umpire, their inability to resist him and cast him off, precluded the possibility of their calling in another, or of settling their disputes uninterfered with,—

particularly as Edward was by this time marching northwards with a powerful army. He established himself in the castle of Norham on the south bank of the Tweed, and here he invited all the competitors and the Scottish parliament to attend him.

When they had here put themselves into his power, he informed them through the mouth of his chief justiciary, Roger le Brabançon, of his unquestionable claim to the kingdom, and then called upon them to acknowledge and ratify it.

Their astonishment struck them dumb.

"*Qui tacet, consentire videtur*," saith the Roman: and, if Edward thought so now, he afterwards discovered that, of a truth, they were not willing to relinquish their rights, however impotent they might be to retain them.

On a subsequent occasion of the same nature, their rage and indignation had a like power of sealing their tongues, with the sole exception of the tongue of one baron, who rose up and nobly said, when they were required to assent to the proposition,—"Until we have a king, we can give no answer on so momentous a point."

But the fact was, their king was among them,—or, at all events, their usurper; and the awe inspired by his well-known military fame, their own internal dissensions and weakness, and the fact that a large army was encamped close to them, terrified away every objection, and drove them to an acknowledgment of their own state of vassalage. Robert

Bruce was the first to confess Edward's superiority, and John Baliol the last;—to say nothing of the like confessions from nine other competitors, whom we have not thought it relevant to notice.

He then appointed a number of commissioners, still further to examine the claims, ordering that their decisions should be reported to him next year; but that forsooth in the mean time, in order to put the true heir in possession of the crown, it was necessary that all the fortresses should be delivered up into his hands! and this monstrous demand was complied with, both by the states and by the claimants themselves! He then made all the especial barons and prelates swear fealty to him before the assembly broke up; and, these great matters having been achieved, he marched southwards to quell some disturbances there.

Meanwhile the commissioners diligently debated the question of succession, as to the respective titles of Baliol and Bruce,—a question that was likewise given to most of the celebrated lawyers of Europe. It was very rightly decided in favour of Baliol; and, on his doing homage to Edward for his kingdom, the fortresses were delivered up to him, and he was acknowledged king of Scotland.

Things remaining in this condition for a space, it became the usurper's policy to incite John of Scotland to rebellion, for the purpose of creating to himself an excuse for going to war, merely that

he might lead an army northward and still further establish his dominion over the devoted country: he therefore heaped the most galling indignities and insults upon his royal vassal, and, in fine, succeeded in bringing about the consummation of his unworthy plot.

Unable any longer to endure the oppressions of Edward, the Scots flew to arms and invaded Cumberland. They directed their march through Gratney, or Gretna, at the head of the Solway, of which territory the Johnstones were possessors during the subsequent Border wars,—crossed the Debateable Land,—the sands of the Eden,—and laid siege to Carlisle.

The siege is one of the most remarkable in the annals of warfare.

The mighty host that assembled on the plain beneath the walls amounted to five hundred cavalry, and forty thousand infantry;—and a force no greater has heretofore conquered kingdoms. To such a degree did the consternation of the English rise, when they beheld this puissant army marshalled against them, that the men of the city, instead of resolutely tarrying to defend their homes from the invaders, fled by the south gate further into their own country, leaving the women and children behind, to be dealt with even just as it might happen, for all they cared.

It should appear that their retirement was so

precipitate, that they had little time to take their valuables away with them; or, peradventure, if it be that they did take away their valuables, the said "valuables" did not consist in their wives. That the city would be instantly occupied by the Scots, was looked on as a matter of course; but then, as the women could make no resistance, and consequently were unable to provoke them, they, as harmless, innocent, and unoffending creatures, were considered by their cowardly husbands as perfectly safe from slaughter or vengeance, when the enemy should be among them.

But this very base pusillanimity residing in their own bosoms caused them to underrate the high virtues in their wives, and to be ignorant of the excellent magnanimity that resides in the nature of the other sex, when placed in circumstances of misadventure or peril.

A gruff voice hoarsely summoned the city to surrender and open its gates. Yet, what delicate form is that standing upon the battlements? and what lily-fair hand is that, that grasps a glittering halberd? and what sweet-toned voice is that which responds to the hoarse speaker? saying that, no, forsooth, they could not on any account render up the city to the bare-kneed Scotchmen; — that, indeed, they must be excused; — that, albeit the men had fled away, and had betaken themselves to safety, still they had left the women

behind;—that the women so left behind had not made up their minds to open their gates just yet, nor did they think they should until their besiegers were weary of waiting in the trenches, or sleeping o' nights in the castle ditch;—that they craved favour and forgiveness for this want of good courtesy towards their new visitants;—that they had come to them so suddenly, that they had prepared no banquet fitting such noble guests;—besides, their husbands and brothers being absent, they were diffident of giving wassail entertainments, as it was not their practice to do so in sooth;—that their voices were not very deep, nor much given to the commandment of warriors;—that their arms were not, peradventure, so brawny as most arms that wield the long-sword, nor their fingers quite so hard as most fingers that draw the arblast-bow;—but that for the sake of amusing the Scots, whom indeed they could not on this present receive into their banquet-hall, being only a company of unprotected women, they were content to lay aside the broidering needle and the distaff, to forget white-seam and shell-work for a space, and to strain their fine sinews with the weight of lifting cruel battle-axes, drawing cloth-yard arrows, and plying mangonels;—and lastly, that such being their resolution, from which, if they knew their own minds, they did not mean to swerve, the strangers must not take it amiss,

or hold them discourteous, if they repeated their first answer to the summons, namely, that the ladies positively declined opening their gates to so numerous a host of honourable gentlemen.—Still standing on the battlements, she bid them a hearty farewell, at the same time apologizing that her throat had grown a little dry, and her voice a little husky, by reason of speaking a wee bit longer than was her custom to do.

Ye must not hold it strange, if we say that a stentorian roar burst from the helmeted and bearded ranks that swarmed upon the plain, the moment after this address was ended. Here was matter of infinite mirth and divertisement to the swarthy warriors. A woman had told them that the men had fled away in terror for safety from the city; yet, at the same time had told them that their wives and maidens had thrown aside their needle-work — had refused them entrance — and veritably had avowed it their determination to defend themselves with cruel weapons made of steel, and very heavy to lift, against a mighty host of veterans, just issued from their own country, fresh, healthful, and strong!

Laughing and jesting at the prospect of much unlooked-for pleasant pastime, they ascended the slopes, and, planting their scaling-ladders against the walls, began to mount.

The event, howbeit, was passing strange.

The highest man on the ladder, so far from stepping over the wall, came toppling downward upon the pikes of his companions beneath, pierced to the heart with some deadly weapon. This was not believable, — there must be some mistake. Another mounted,—down he came: then another,—and he came headlong also.

There was something wrong. Let a hundred ladders be planted, and let a thousand men hie up and investigate the cause of this impediment.

There was no mistake in the matter. The Scots mounted by crowds; but the countless spears of the fair besieged thrust them back again gasping, and giving out their lives along with the ruddy fountains of their hearts' blood.

The Scotch were more than astonished,—they were dismayed. However, they now assaulted the fortifications systematically, resolutely, and fiercely. The crossbow-men drew their bolts at the defenders on the towers, staining with crimson many a white skin; a numerous body essayed to overtop the works by an impetuous escalade; and the Annandale men, with their steel-headed double-length spears, tried to clear a way for them to reach the battlements. It was all in vain:—they were beaten back with the most universal slaughter; they were cut down wherever they attempted to make a lodgment;

and they were minced to pieces with swords, or pierced to instant death with arrows or partizans, the moment they showed themselves near the summit of the walls.

This, for a long time, was too ridiculous for belief; but when repeated efforts only tended to strew the plain and fill the ditch with their dead countrymen, instead of leading on to victory, the Scotch looked at each other in wonderment, and turned away from the city in despair and shame.

Fierce indeed was the assault; but brave and determined was the defence. The siege was raised, and given up as impracticable; and the invaders decamped hastily, and marched eastward into Northumberland, leaving the ladies successful defenders of their city.*

* Perhaps we have employed more words in describing this memorable siege than were absolutely necessary: but we love to do the ladies justice, and must crave indulgence on that score. We have not departed from history, since all the old writers agree in saying that the men retired from the city;—that the women successfully defended it with vast courage;—and that the Scotch brought the mighty host, as mentioned above, over the Border, and invested it to no purpose, but were enforced to raise the siege, and retire in shame.

CHAPTER VII.

Battles between the English and the Scotch in the reign of Edward the First.

One king unmakes another: then
Upstarts a third full quickly:
The first prepares for warfare, when,
He dies—being very sickly.

John Baliol, the king, procured from his holiness, Pope Celestine, a dispensation for himself and his nation, excusing them from the obligation of all their oaths of feudality; and then, when thus freed, he and his adherents formally renounced all allegiance to Edward of England.

The Rubicon (the Sark, of course) was now passed, and nothing but the clangour of war was heard on every side.

The English monarch led a host northward, well-ordered and well-disciplined, and equal in numbers to that of the Scots that had been so memorably driven from Carlisle, and eastward into

the shire of Northumberland: he invaded Scotland on the Cheviot side, and, immediately assaulting Berwick both by sea and land, took that town by storm, and barbarously put eight thousand persons to the sword. Edward then sent Earl Warrenne forward with twelve thousand men to attempt Dunbar; and this nobleman, meeting with the Scots in the plain, encountered them so fiercely and so effectually, that he drove them before him, and brought back a complete victory. The perdition of the vanquished amounted to twenty thousand. The falls of Roxborough, Edinburgh, Stirling, and divers other especial strengths, incontinently ensued; so that, in a short space after the Southrons had passed the frontier, the whole of the Lowlands, stretching out betwixt the Cheviots and the Grampians, had been reduced to submission. In order to effect the subjugation of the Highlands, a strong reinforcement of Irish and Welsh, who, from the natures of their own native countries, were best fitted to ensue an enemy into his wilds, fastnesses, and savage mountains, was despatched to hunt the kilted Caledonians to defeat and death. This, for many reasons, they were able to do:—Baliol himself had a meek and irresolute spirit, that suited rather to bear a sceptre and diadem, than a jeddart-staff and helmet; so that, when he began to lose heart and waver, his adherents very soon began to waver

also, and fall off from him: his people were disunited and at variance amongst themselves, broken by faction, and estranged by a contrariety of interests; —and, as the house that is divided against itself cannot stand, neither can a kingdom so lacerated stand either.

Baliol, in fine, renounced his crown to Edward; and, with much abject submission, protested his contrition for having so rebelliously forgot his faith to his liege lord.

The conqueror pressed his victories forward as far north as Elgin, meeting with none except those who came to cast themselves at his feet to do homage: even the turbulent Highlanders promised obedience in the most slavish manner, and Scotland was now entirely subdued and reduced to an apparent tranquillity.

It was in returning from this conquest, that Edward took the Coronation Stone with him into England. The stone itself, fixed in the bottom of the chair, of an iron-like or steely colour veined with red, is a parallelopiped in figure, measuring in inches about $11 \times 13 \times 22$. It is reported to have formed the pillow of Jacob, when he fell asleep on the plain of Luz, and dreamt his angelic vision: it was afterwards taken to Brigantia in the kingrick of Gallicia in Spain, and used as a seat of justice by Gathelus or Gathol, king of the incipient Scots, coeval with Moses: Simon Brach,

monarch of the same dynasty, 700 years before the Christian era, bore it with him into Ireland: Fergus, about 330 years before Christ, removed it to the castle of Dunstaffnage in Lorn: Kennet II. took it to Scone in 850 after Christ: and lastly there it remained until Edward carried it to Westminster in 1396.

It bears the following inscription:—

"Ni fallat fatum, Scoti, quocunque locatum
Invenient lapidem, regnare teneantur ibidem."

Thus rendered into mother English:—

"Should fate not fail, where'er this stone is found,
The Scots shall monarchs of that realm be crown'd."

And hence it is that the Scotch to this day believe themselves to form the principal portion of Great Britain, and to enjoy the sovereignty over that part ycleped England, because James the Sixth—First, on the defunction of Elizabeth, came and took possession of England, a kingless realm, and England did not go and take possession of Scotland. Thus, according to Lion King at Arms, the marshalling of the royal achievement can scarcely be fair heraldry, so long as the noble and rampant beast, girded about by the double tressure, is excluded from the first quarter of the shield.

John Baliol was a close prisoner for more than two years in the Tower of London; but, being afterwards liberated, he retired to France, where

he remained in seclusion during the remnant of his days.

Patriotic risings of the people, however, soon manifested themselves throughout the newly compelled province; and the most distinguished champion of that period started up in the person of Sir William Wallace, with whom, in a short space of time, and after some successes gained, was confederated Sir William Douglas.

Meanwhile, Edward was making great preparations against a descent on France, a measure that was not over-agreeable to some of his nobles; since the cause, by them, was not looked upon as altogether just, especially as they were heavily taxed to pander to the arbitrary ambition of their restless prince. He had assembled an army which he purposed to send over into Gascony under the command of Humphrey Bohun, Earl of Hereford; but the haughty peer decidedly objected to the measure, and positively refused to go. A violent altercation ensued hereon; and the king, now in a towering rage, fiercely cried out to Hereford, —"Sir Earl, by God you shall either go or hang!"

"By God, Sir King," replied the nobleman, "I will neither go nor hang!" Upon this he departed, together with about thirty considerable barons who were of his way of thinking. The invasion was given up, and Scottish affairs demanded attention.

Wallace had now been running a brilliant career of victory over the English viceroys and vicegerents; and to check this before Scotland should regain her liberty, as she was apparently doing by rapid strides, the Earl Warrenne was commissioned thitherward with forty thousand men. He entered the struggling country by the West Marches, directly through the field of our most particular labours in this authentic work.

Having crossed the marshy flats of Carlisle, the Moss of Solway, and forded the Sark at the head of the Firth, and trod upon ground now occupied by the modern Gretna Green, yet without giving a thought upon love or matrimony, but only upon blood and murder, he pressed onwards to Irvine. The Scots prudently retreated before him, as their promises of advantage were but slender in their present position; and retired as far as Stirling, where a battle was fought, and where Wallace gained the day. Cressingham, one of Warrenne's generals, much hated by the adverse party, was slain in this action; and his enemies showed their vengeance on his dead body by actually making girths and covering saddles with his skin, which they fiercely stripped off.

A series of other martial achievements, happily struck in the oppressed province, recalled Edward from Flanders, whither he had gone to prosecute a war. He collected, saith the ayntient

Kronpkyll, a mighty host one hundred thousand strong, culled out of all his dependencies of England, Wales, and Ireland; and, placing himself at the head of this multitude, advanced towards the Cheviots. He soon came up with those he sought; — encountered them, routed them, and is reported to have slaughtered no less than sixty thousand.

Wallace retreated in good order along the banks of the Carron; and it was on this stream, on this occasion, that he met the young Bruce, who called to him and entreated him to submit to the conqueror,—a measure to which the former would by no means incline, but, on the contrary, made so eloquent and so affecting a reply to the latter, that Bruce was immediately converted to the cause of his country, and, repenting him of his submission to Edward, secretly resolved thenceforward to strike for freedom.

The English monarch returned into his own country by crossing the Sark and the Debateable Land, amusing himself, howbeit, on the way through Annandale, by assaulting and reducing Bruce's castle of Lochmaben.

Bruce being in the power of his enemy, and, worse still, in his custody, Edward, in order that he might murder his way to the sovereignty of Scotland, expressed it as his intention, one night when he had been drinking somewhat freely with

his courtiers, that he would put this competitor for the crown to death next day; and to this step he had been partly instigated by the jealous advices of John Cummin, another heir to the Scottish monarchy.

The Earl of Gloucester being present, and hearing what passed, forthwith sent a messenger to his friend in durance, with twelve pence and a pair of spurs. Bruce took the hint, and prepared for flight.

We are pleasantly informed that he had the shoes of his horse put on hind-side before; so that the impressions of them on the snow, which then lay on the ground, could be no indication to any who might seek him as to his progress Scotland-ward.

He forded the river Eden, not distant far from the city, on whose wall the sun shines bright; crossed the matrimonial district at the head of the Solway, which we desire to celebrate in these pages; and stopped not until he arrived at Lochmaben, so lately in the hands of his foe.

A space after this he fell at jars and ungentle speech with the aforesaid Cummin in the Convent of the Minorites at Dumfries, and, in the ungovernableness of his passion, pierced him deep with a steel blade; yet Lord Hailes held that the deed was not the fruit of malice prepense. The persecuted kingdom flew to arms,—the friends of

Bruce rallied around him,—he hastened to Scone to be crowned, and the diadem was actually placed upon his head by a woman, the Countess of Buchan, sister to Macduff, Earl of Fife. Edward had now to commence his work all over again, for his power north of the border had been well-nigh annihilated by these deeds.

The young and mettlesome king performed many a bright chevisance of valour and hardiment; sometimes stricken down by defeat from his enemies, and, at others, dealing unto them even so much as they gave him. The monarch of England, though well advanced in years, was still untired and untiring; and, once more denouncing the Scots as incorrigible, made preparation for immense war upon them again, vowing that he never would rest until he had punished them for their disobedience. He had been sadly afflicted with bodily ailments of late, yet was he resolved to chastise them in person, for his spirit was as active as ever. In traversing his own kingdom, and even until he had got so far as Carlisle, he had been compelled to journey in a palfrey litter; but here, feeling himself in some little sort convalescent, and able to proceed in a more martial estate, he solemnly offered up the said litter in the cathedral church of the city as a gift to heaven.

When this pious ceremony had been achieved,

he feebly threw himself upon his horse, and, leading his puissant army out through the Scotland gate, directed his course onward towards the head of the Solway waters, even over the same ground as we have already conducted the reader times not a few. Surely ye now know this ground passing well—its features—its nature: yet notwithstanding that here and there, in the present day, on the great Moss the eye of the peregrinator meets but a cheerless view of black peat and barrenness, relieved partially with squalid huts and thriftless enclosures; in the troublous reign of Edward I., the face of this region was far more sad, sandy, and sedgy. The billows of the western brine flowed yestily over the flats, whensoever the occiduous tempests puffed rudely in the face of green nature: the rush, the sword-leaved flag, and the rank coltsfoot, overgrew their commission in the rancid marshes stretching along the banks of the Esk; and the noxious toad lifted his head above the pestiferous pools, and croaked hoarsely to the lizard looking out of his hole.

Edward crawled no more than six miles in four days, whereas the lovers of this present era hie over the Moss nine miles and a half in the space of one hour: but then Edward was not going to be married to the lady of his heart's election; —no, forsooth, he was only going to conquer a kingdom.

When he had attained so far as to Burgh-on-the Sands, his strength failed him, and he began to see that all is vanity and more than vexation—that our mightiest transactions are but child's play —that we were only born as it were the day before yesterday, and surely cannot have completed our threescore and ten — and that the end of life is sure to come before we have half finished the projects we had in hand, and just as we were on the point of setting about the arrangement of something new, mightier and better than all the rest, so that it is an infinite pity that we should die, and not accomplish it.

It was all nothing: his ailments now came upon him so grievously as to be past durance; wherefore, to eschew them, he died.

CHAPTER VIII.

Military Annals: Bruce and Baliol. Border Laws.

Of kings deposed, or made, or dead,
And what might be the cause;
Of Warden Courts where much was said
Touching the Border Laws.

The dead bones of Edward I. were not borne forward through Gretna into Albin, as he had enjoined with his latest breath; but his successor, of an easy and placable constitution, averse to the stern life of a campaigner, and less vigorous than his father, gave up the Scottish war, retired southwards, and disbanded his army.

At this, the young Bruce issued from his fastnesses, and commenced a most brilliant career of victory. He paid a visit to the capital of Cumberland, by traversing the amorous regions wherein our scene is for the most part laid; and then, veering eastward, put a crowning glory upon his fame by scattering his foes on the banks of the streamlet of Bannockburn.

This amorous region was also trodden under the feet of slaughtermen and barbed steeds a space after, when the naked-kneed Northerners poured through the western marches to carry herriment into Lancashire; and again, in the following reign of Edward III., no less than twenty thousand cavalry, armed at all points, covered the Moss, and the Sands of Burgh, with the prints of iron horse-shoes.

John Baliol, who had been duly enthroned by Edward I., and then as duly deposed and put in the Tower, had a son ycleped Edward, who now started up against Bruce,—or rather his infant successor David,—and prepared to carry a species of York-and-Lancaster war into Scotland, such as in aftertimes dislocated the frame of England so cruelly. He quitted Normandy, where he had dwelt in seclusion since his father's death, and, with the aid of certain powerful allies, invaded his own country with much success. His claim to the crown having lain dormant for some time, and Bruce having built unto himself a stable throne by valour and activity, it was not without much difficulty that he effected a lodgement in Fife, notwithstanding he had vainly flattered himself that the offspring of the former acknowledged monarch would have been welcomed with friendly zeal.

Although forty thousand men debated his coming, he contrived, during the turmoil of a hard

fight by the river Erne, to use up twelve thousand of them—himself only losing thirty men. This was "doing the thing" in grand style. Other victories, nearly as decisive, followed in succession; so that, in an incredibly short period after his landing, he brought all Scotland to his feet, and a thorough revolution was effected, when his coronation at Scone speedily took place.

But there is nothing sure under the sun (with few exceptions), not even the retention of a diadem; and it was in Annandale, where many remarkable things in all ages have befallen, that a counter-revolution to his prejudice was effected, entirely sapping and subverting the splendid edifice that his labours had erected.

The youthful Baliol was now king of his own realm; his father's claim was confessed by a large body of nobles, and they had anointed him their liege lord and sovereign head within the walls of the royal palace of Scone. The rapidity of his elevation had been the unspeakable dismay of his foes, the admiration of his friends, and the wonder of both.

But divers pesterous gad-flies of the adverse party still buzzed about his ears, and it was expedient that these should be beaten down. Sir Archibald Douglas, his evil genius and his terror, was one of these, and not the least. This noxious creature, together with Simon Fraser and William

Lord of Liddesdale above Gretna, had a kind of wasp's nest near Annan, and the new king set out upon a martial progress thitherward in order to destroy it. This matter was commenced incontinently; the clash of weapons was loud, and the notches on their edges were hacked so deep and so thick, that swords soon became saws: but the just do not always prosper in this world, for Douglas and his partizans won the day before night, and Baliol lost it before sun-down.

This was a sad reverse; and so complete was the success on one side, and so crushing was the defeat on the other, that Baliol, in bodily fear of Douglas his foe, hastily took horse, saith the legend, "without saddle or bridle," being "almost frightened to death;" and riding, in his hurry, "half naked" through the modern parish of Gretna and the Debateable Land, he made for Carlisle, where he fortified himself, "to shun the fury of Douglas."

Thus he lost his throne by as sudden a revolution as he had won it, being now destitute of resources, means, rescues, and friends. But it was the policy of Edward to lend him a hand in his reverses, and to establish his ascendancy in Scotland, because he would promise to consider this monarch his liege lord, as his father had abjectly done, and himself only a vassal in his own kingdom; wherefore Edward invested Berwick in Ba-

liol's behalf, and in two months reduced it to extremity, so much so, that the governor promised to surrender to the English if his own countrymen did not lend him succours speedily. This fact having become known to Douglas the Scotch commander, he hastened to the relief, and drew up his forces in battle-array nigh unto Halidon Hill; but Victoria, the bright goddess of success and triumph, raised her diadem over England, and prosperity attended her. The tartaned sons of the Grampians were driven off with the immense slaughter of thirty thousand men; whilst we are assured that, under the wing of the abovementioned goddess, the Southrons lost but one knight, one esquire, and twelve private soldiers,—or, to take it at the worst, according to Hume, thirteen private soldiers.

This brought about another revolution; such is the tossing to and fro of those who put to sea on the billows of Fortune. Baliol was again acknowledged king; a parliament was assembled at Edinburgh town; his peers drew round him with bended knee and infinite obeisance, and his title was fully confirmed.

We are compelled to say that Gretna had nothing to do with this: at least, it had no connexion with the brilliant achievement, any more than that Gretna most certainly formed a part of the realm in which it took place, and in the event

of which it was much concerned; and that both Baliol and Douglas, and the English army, had in aforetime often marched through the said Gretna in their various skirmishes. More than this we cannot say.

During the half-century succeeding, revolutions and counter-revolutions once more befel north the Cheviots: Bruce was recalled—glaives and claymores were bared,—battles were lost and won,—and Mars, divorced from his wife Venus, stalked over the land.

About this time the depredations on the border, the *raids* of divers bands of moss-troopers, and forays for the purpose of indiscriminate plunder, had become so notorious that the youthful King Richard II. led a host over the frontiers of his kingdom proper, to the end that he might stop this beginning; but, whilst he made pleasant pastime to himself and his followers by burning Edinburgh, Perth, and Dundee, the untrowsered Scots in the west also made indifferent good pastime to themselves on the arena and stage of this veritable history, by devastating the green face of the land whithersoever they trod.

The French had from time to time been the close allies of the Scotch, sometimes for the purposes of mutual combination, strength, and the better to overwhelm a common enemy, and at others they had been brought a great deal in con-

tact for reasons less amicable and beneficial; but in either case the consequence arrived at was, that they both became intimate with each other. In the former relations it happened, that, when the Scotch were collecting their powers against the southern moiety of the island, the French (when it was their interest) readily sent over vast reinforcements to assist them; and thus it was, that during the struggles of the middle ages, whether on the frontier or in the more central counties, we often find the mincing wearers of trunk-hose and slashed doublets marshalled in rank and file along with the ruder Kelts, who went with bare legs, raw-hide boots with the hair outwards, and that scanty Roman legacy, the philibeg.

Owing to the rivalries and jealousies that rankled between the neighbouring barons, who fought under different colours, it was not possible that peace could be maintained between them; they were the petty sovereigns of their fief, having many vassals under them, ready at their nod to do their bidding, however arbitrary, against any neighbour or any rival, whether in good or evil. As they lived by plunder, and furnished their larders by the proceeds of rapine, the nearest and most wealthy barons in their vicinage were often their most deadly foes, because they may have been the most often preyed upon. Hence "good neighbourhood" in those days, and especially on

the territory of which we speak, consisted in mutual depredation, robbery, assault, and retaliation. They paid very little deference to the commands of their respective sovereigns, kept national truces but imperfectly, and made war or peace on those around them, just as it suited their humour, passions, or larder and store-room.

Albeit the statutes of the realm at large were set at nought, as being in no wise compulsory,—that is, unless it were convenient,—still, for their own use, and for the further security of their own power in transactions touching themselves, or applying to their own peculiar intercourse, they established, *gradatim*, a series of conventional regulations, which, when collected in a better digested form in later times, was known by the name of the body of Border Laws. The wardens of the marches, who were officers appointed by the crown to repress the inroads of the dalesmen of the antagonist realm, and to maintain good order, were empowered to hold courts of justice, and decide cases, and return verdicts against such offenders as were apprehended and brought before them. "Jeddart Justice," or hanging the prisoner first and trying him afterwards, was however too often the procedure of these courts; for the wardens were despotic and tyrannical, armed with the diploma of their sovereign, which gave them immense power, and, in themselves, allowing

their passions, their revenge, or their hatred to award his doom, just as the impulse of the moment prompted.

In seasons of national war, he had the right of calling out all the fencible men dwelling within the circuit of his wardenry, between the ages of sixteen and sixty; and these he headed as captain-general, leading them against such freebooters as infested his district, or else conducting them to the more important work of invading the enemy's country. On these occasions it was his duty to observe, and cause to be observed, all the ancient rules and customs which had been recognised as laws by common consent amongst the marchmen; and through the barbarism of these enactments may be here and there traced the veins of a rude yet chivalrous idea of honour. Some of the enactments pointed to the observance of equity of dealing and the preservation of privilege between man and man amongst themselves; others referred to their treatment of their prisoners, non-intercourse or traitorous correspondence with any individual of the obverse country, and such other items as enforced subordination amongst a semi-barbarous conjunction of men. Thus, it was laid down, that if any soldier followed the chase on a horse belonging to his comrade, the true owner of the horse was entitled to half the booty taken. This was done in order to make them use their

own horses, and not appropriate those of their neighbours. Again:—He who detected a traitor, was rewarded with the sum of one hundred shillings; and he who aided his escape from justice, suffered the pain of death. If the stewards of Annandale and Kircudbright omitted to fire the beacons, and give timely notice on the approach of a foe, they were fined one merk; and he who neglected to join the array of the country to oppose the foe at the signal of the beacon-lights, forfeited his goods, and was placed at the disposal of the warden's will. In the partition of spoil, two portions were allowed to each bowman. Whoever deserted his commander and comrades, and abode not in the field to the uttermost, forfeited his goods, and became liable to the punishment of a traitor. Whoever bereft his comrade of his horse, spoil, or prisoner, was subject to the pains of treason, if he did not make restitution when the right of property became known to him.

These and certain other military regulations were of no small necessity and benefit to those who were constantly engaged in Border warfare; indeed, without law of some sort or other, no race of beings and no order of society, however crude, can at all maintain an existence for any length of time.

Marauders and moss-troopers taken in the act were dealt with in the most summary manner,—Jeddart justice, in these cases, being the least

trouble; and drowning or hanging were the favourite modes of punishment. "The next tree, or the deepest pool of the nearest stream," says the author of the Border antiquities, "was indifferently used on these occasions."

The principal part of the warden's duty respected his transactions in the opposite kingdom in the time of both peace as well as war; in short, he was the bull-dog stationed at the outer gate, in order to guard the national premises.

The military regulations, hereinbefore discoursed of, were arranged by William, Earl of Douglas, in the year 1468; and the exordium runs thus:—"Be it remembered that, on the 18th daie of December, 1468, Earle William Douglas assembled the whole lordes, freeholders, and eldest borderers, that best knowledge had, at the college of Linclouden; and there he caused those lordes and borderers bodylie to be sworne, the holie Gospel touched, that they justly and trewlie, after their cunning, should decrete, decern, deliver, and put in order and writinge the statutes, ordinances, and uses of Marche that were ordained in Black Archibald of Douglas' days;" &c. &c. And it appears that they were thence adopted by the English, after certain necessary alterations made therein; for a copy of them is found in the MS. of Master Bell, a warden clerk of the western marches of England *in tempore Elizabethæ Reginæ.*

These frontier Cerberi, who guarded the portals of the realm, had the means of formally concluding truces with the opposite warden for their own jurisdictions, even as they were also able to carry death and destruction along with them, if they saw fitting to go to warfare; and the process of documentarily making out such an agreement was carried through with the show of no small pomp and circumstance.

A notable indenture of this kind was achieved between the Percy out of Northumberland, and Archibald Douglas, Lord of Galloway, at the water of Esk, beside Salon or Solway, when these two chieftains bore themselves with all the parade of monarchs of interminable kingdoms.

In times of peace it was the warden's province to maintain and cultivate a good understanding betwixt all parties; and to prevent, where it was possible, the nightly practice of spoliation and plunder by moss-troopers. Few depredators were so notorious, and so incorrigible, as the clans of the western march; and, amongst these, more particularly the Elliots and Armstrongs of Liddesdale, who, according to the proverb, were "thieves all," the Nixons, Grahames, and Crossers of the Debateable Land; and, with shame be it spoken, the Johnstones of the since gentle, amiable, and most loving soil of Gratney or Gretna. But if Gretna was not free from fierce hatred in a by-

gone age, assuredly she has, in later times, made ample amends for past cruelty, by cultivating more love in one year within the precincts of her amorous parish, than all the parishes in the world are able to cultivate besides.

CHAPTER IX.

Border feuds: Percy and Douglas.

A skirmish up in Annan glen,
In which the English played
The devil with the Scottish men—
But were at last repaid.

In the iron age of Gretna, there befel a most piteous matter in those parts.

The innocent waters of the Sark ran blood, and the shame of the English was dyed in sorrowful hues, blushed over with crimson; for the Scots harvested glory with their martial reap-hooks, and drove their foes before them like bolts from a catapult.

Forays and raids for plunder, incendiarism, and such like, were of nightly perpetration, mutually carried on between the marchmen of the two countries; not only for the absolute purpose of furnishing their larders with store of good beefins and kine, being that which none can live without; but furthermore for the wanton purpose of making

pastime and promoting good neighbourhood. A community of effects was the custom of all those who were puissant enough to enforce it; that is, of all those who needed, and were puissant enough to take from the rich: and that which a moss-trooper thus seized on, he held without any pangs of compunction, considering it morally his own rightful property until — when? why, until a stronger than he snatched it from him, against his ability to resist; and then he resigned it, even with the same grace as it had been resigned to him by the former possessor— swearing oaths that would split oak-planks two inches thick, and vowing revenge in time to come.

Edward I. had sown the poisonous germens of a deep-rooted animosity between the two kingdoms, when he so unamiably usurped the dominion of Scotland; for, before that fatal era, it is noted in history, and, still better, in tradition, that the deadly feuds, and predatory inroads, had not commenced. His preposterous demands, so rudely urged, called the rankest simples out of the congeries of passions whereof the human mind is made up, from their hiding-places into action; and, when the devil in man has been awaked, passing strong must be the narcotic that shall be able to put him to sleep again. Hence it is, that he slumbered not on the frontier from the days of the first Edward of England,

till the translation of the last James of Scotland; but raved like the foul fiend up and down the land, late, early, night, morning, at all tides and seasons, knowing no peace, and seeking no quietude.

The hereditary devil of hatred was awake upon the borders. In the particular year, 1380, an evil conjunction of fifteen thousand English took their hostile way right over Carlisle sands, the great Moss, and the district of Gratney at the head of the Firth, directing their course northward along the banks of the rivers where the best pasture grew, and consequently where the fattest beeves were wont to browse. Many were the bastle-houses and peels walled round about with their yard-thick barnkin, that stood upon the strongest braes rising above the torrent, wherein dwelt the head of the clan, or some principal laird of the wilderness. Such of these they attacked as seemed fitting: in some they found not a soul to dispute their entry, as the occupiers had fled to the labyrinths of Tarras Moss, or some other wild; so they set fire to the building and went their way: in others they found the barnkin secured, and the turrets covered with spearmen, speaking javelins, and also tossing them down.

These bastle-houses, as they were called, differed essentially from the baronial castles of the lordly English, being neither so extensive in their ranges

of buildings, towers, or battlemented walls, nor so largely stored in provisions as to enable the garrison to resist a protracted siege; but were rather peels of compact build, massive and well cemented, and placed upon crags or eminences, or other situations wisely chosen for natural strength. The less wealth of the lairds, as compared with the possessions of the Neustrian peerage from the south,—their less expanded ideas of chivalrous luxury,—their smaller knowledge of the pomps, splendour, refinement, and exclusiveness of the feudal system of the Normans as more thoroughly established in England, and their more inveterately confirmed habits of predation, as judged with their more civilized neighbours,—these were in a great measure the reasons that directed the inferior architecture of their fortresses.

The lands, also, in the vicinage, were less carefully tilled, than with the Southrons of that day; since they depended for subsistence rather upon the cattle of those whom they chose to plunder, than on the vegetable productions of the soil; and thus it was, that on the approach of an invading enemy, they either shut themselves up with bolts and bars, and defended themselves against a short, though fierce assault, such as they thought they could repel, or else, if the invaders appeared too numerous for them, or seemed to purpose a system of protracted warfare, they hastily

retired to the mountains, driving their sheep and beeves along with them.

In this case they left their lands to be wasted and their dwellings to be burnt—but we are told that neither the wasting nor the burning chagrined them much; for, in the first place, the indifferently cultivated state of the country left very little to destroy; and, in the second place, such was the massiveness of their masonry, that the fire did but very little injury to their walls; the only damage being the destruction of the floors and roof. These, being made in a rude fashion, were easily reconstructed when the spoilers had retired.

Hence, it is not to be wondered at, that the borders for centuries, and to a very late period, continued to be more barren and more neglected than any other inhabited part of the two kingdoms whatsoever; for the practice of incursion, incendiarism, and ruination, was not of rare occurrence, befalling as it may be peradventure, once or so in the generation of a man, but on the contrary, came to the moss trooper as naturally as the setting of the evening sun, so that blind indeed was that owl who opened his eyes at cock-shut time, if he did not witness preparations for a raid regularly every night.

On the occasion of which we speak in this especial chapter, the incursors principally ravaged

Annandale and Nithsdale, together with the other dells and dales that lay on their line of transcursion; and here, from their irresistible numbers, they should seem to have had their own way, and to have wrought their own will with the riches of the land, such as they found.

The Scoto-Saxon "Red-shanks" as they were termed, owing to their going bare-legged, and owing to the severity of the climate, which turned them of that numb-cold hue, had adopted a system of tactics much like what we find to obtain in the present day amongst the savages of the back-woods. They avoided decided pitched battles in the open plain, and rather preferred what is termed *bush fighting* in the forest and on the prairie. They employed a wasting, desultory, scattered, ambush-laying method, by which their foes were harassed, surprised, or perplexed: where they had previously put grain into the ground, they destroyed it with vast assiduity, thus leaving no harvests to be reaped by those who did not sow; and as they retreated off these fields to the hills with their cattle, they viewed with little concern any further works of devastation which might be perpetrated by the new comers.

Secured in these inaccessible places, they cunningly watched their opportunity for taking vengeance and making a full retaliation: they allowed

their foes to work their will; they suffered them to plunder whatsoever they had been unable to carry to the mountains, and to burn the floors and roofs of their bastle-houses; they let them overrun the plains without impediment, feeling they could do small injury where everything was desert; and then, when the time came, they rushed into England with incredible fury, and there enacted the same horrors which had before been enacted in Scotland.

This ferocious and uncompromising mode of warfare had been strongly recommended in the rhymes considered as a legacy from Robert Bruce to his successors, and which indeed do, at this very day, comprise the most effectual and almost the only defensive measures which can be adopted by a poor and mountainous country, when invaded by the overpowering armies of a wealthy neighbour.

The learned Fordun, in his Scotichronicon, sets forth in "quaint Inglis" the practices of his countrymen in such pastimes, showing how they should rather fight on foot than on horseback, as being then more able in the glen to flit from rock to rock, or eschew the foe by retiring into secret places; that a bow and a spear were the best walls of protection that a man could have; that it was their usage to secrete their stores in unknown retreats, whilst they laid bare the

extended valley when their enemies approached,—and that, by loud alarums in the night, they would terrify these enemies off their land. "This," says Fordun, "is the sage counsel of King Robert's testament:—

> "This is the counsell and intente
> Of goode Kinge Robert's testamente."

But let us to the point—

So numerous was the host of English that now forded the Sark and penetrated up the glens of the Annan and the Nith, in comparison with the weaponshaw which the natives could hastily collect on the instant, that they wisely slunk away on their approach, scattering themselves about in the thickets so as to prevent the possibility of being surrounded and overwhelmed at one fell swoop, and securing to themselves by this dispersedness, the means of keeping good watch, until the time should present itself when they might rush from their concealments, and return the favour with a wannion. They were even pleased, not only to destroy the crops that grew upon the bosom of Mother Earth, that their foes should not gather, but they also dismantled their dwellings as they retired, sometimes burning away the interior, leaving only a smoky and blackened shell, and at others, going so far as to demolish the walls, and eradicate the very foundations from the rock out of which

they sprung. For they had long discovered that, albeit they lacked nothing of animal courage when debating it hotly with crossed blades hand to hand, still in systematic invasions, they were far inferior in scientific stratagem to the belted knights of England; that they succeeded best in hasty attack, precipitate escalade, and fierce charge; that they were deficient in the strict discipline which would take them step by step patiently through a long campaign; and that though they could beat off their besiegers from a short assailment upon their fortlets, they were, owing to their slender resources in an impoverished district, and their deficiency of discipline amongst themselves, rarely able to withstand the tedious approaches of a regular blockade. The existence of peel-houses, therefore, along the border, they found to be rather a detriment to their safety than otherwise, since not being strong enough to retain them to themselves, they found that they had only been building them for their enemies. They were truly the sparrows who built their nests, whilst the English were the cuckoos who turned them out and dwelt in them.

The good Lord James Douglas—he who was commissioned to carry the heart of his King to Jerusalem, but which he flung at the Moors during the onset of a battle with them in Spain on his way eastward—the good Lord James Douglas surprised his own castle in Lanarkshire three seve-

ral times, it having been as frequently taken from him and garrisoned by these superior disciplinarians, and on each occasion, that they should not play the cuckoo thus with him, he was at the pains of demolishing it.

The military system of Wallace was on the same principle; and in fine, with very few exceptions, the strong and extensive fortresses which had arisen on the Scottish side of the Marches during the better times preceding the usurpation of Edward I., were levelled with the ground when the troublous period of the thirteenth century commenced.

These facts have been acutely commented on by that interminable writer, Sir Walter of Abbotsford; and he further assures us, in language of most pleasant reading, that the castles of Roxburgh, Jedburgh, and divers others, erected in "the good old times," were infinitely more extensive than any which were built in after days, —that they could not be pulled down, such was their massive solidity, and such the unskilfulness of the Scotch in the arts of destruction,—and that, to raze the stronghold of Jedburgh, it could scarcely be done without so much time and labour as would render it necessary to impose a tax of two pennies upon every hearth in the land to defray the expense. But the Duke of Albany, then Regent, perceiving the unpopularity of the impost,

drew the required sums out of the Crown revenues. But we forget ourselves again :

We have told the most forbearing reader, that an immense body of men out of Cumberland had entered over the gentle soil where Gretna lies, and were beginning a ferocious herriment of all the parts adjacent.

Up Nithside they went without let or hinderance, not because the dalesmen took pleasure at their coming, or welcomed them with accolades and tender embracements about the neck, but because they were impotent to oppose so large a company, and therefore were enforced to let them have their own way. This expedition seems to have been a pay-off against the Scots, who had been latterly intruding without invitation into several of the counties lying south of the works of Hadrian not pertaining to them, or shaded under the folds of that banner which bears *Azure, a Saltire Argent*, for St. Andrew : for a fierce animosity had lately arisen out of a murder committed at Roxburgh fair in a scuffle, when a servant of the Earl of March fell dead, because a long piece of cold steel had been spitted right through his delicate viscera—and men's viscera can in no wise endure such usage.

To retaliate for this, the said Earl, together with his brother german, the ditto of Moray, assembled their followers, and duly attending the

next fair at Roxburgh, slew all of the offending party they could come within weapon's length of, and then set fire to the town. The English, having suffered greatly on this occasion, thought fit to invade Scotland forthwith, for the purpose of taking vengeance on the Earls; and in their way they ruined the estate of Sir John Gordon, a man of vast property thereabout: and as nothing tries the equanimity of people's tempers so much as having their property wantonly destroyed before their faces, we must not marvel if Sir John was a little ruffled afterwards. Certain it is, he lost no time in rushing wrathfully into England, where he made himself master of a large booty in cattle and prisoners without commiseration, and savagely slew all and every one who opposed him.

Lord Percy then drew together seven thousand spears and bowmen, wherewith he ran a like career; and the consequence was, that the border war raged inveterately on both sides—and continued to do so uninterruptedly for several years. Roxburgh fair again became foul with deeds of slaughter; the peers of each nation visited, reciprocally, sometimes the lands of the one and sometimes the lands of another, dispensing their favours to all in succession; and not long before the expedition into Dumfrieshire, of which we have been endeavouring to speak throughout this chapter, we find the Percy, now Earl of North-

umberland, hurling desolation around him at the head of ten thousand slaughtermen.

When the English had burnt and destroyed, to their numerous hearts' contents, everything they came near in the dales of Nith and Annan, they turned about and directed their steps homeward, carrying a rich booty along with them. Being big with success and assured of their triumph, they paced it easily right over the territory of Gretna Green, until they neared the disembogue-ment of the Sark into the Firth. As it had now become night, their progress was necessarily retarded, first by the obscurity, and next by the badness of the ground near the vicinage of the dangerous moss; but behold, these mighty victors were incontinently stricken with a sore panic, so that their haughty souls began to give way, and their stalwart limbs to tremble: for, there as they stood round about where the toll-gate near the bridge may be seen, and of which hereafter, the drums of their ears were dinned by the sudden sound of many voices shouting in the dark.

At this the hitherto conquerors quailed piteously, and not knowing how to cuff an invisible foe, betook themselves to precipitate and ignoble flight. A handful of five hundred Scots rushed in upon the host of fifteen thousand English, and taking them much as Gideon and his men had taken the Midianites of old, indiscriminately slew great

numbers of the Southrons, driving the rest like feathers before a whirlwind. And the English ran—oh! how they ran—and in their terror they jumped into the briny surges of the Solway, leaving their plunder and their many dead behind, divers of them becoming unwilling divers into the waters, where they perished because they could not breathe so inspissated an element. Still the Scots fought, and the English fought, but the Scots prevailed, and the English failed; and the Scots recovered the lost treasure again, and took prisoners not a few over and above. Some managed, by dint of much floundering, to gurgle their way across the Firth and the Sark, till they crept out, somewhat humid, upon the opposite bank; and, without tarrying there for a change of dry linen, they ran on the nine miles to Carlisle with the water rolling in their ears, and their hair wetting their shirt collars; where they narrated to the Cumberlanders therein dwelling, all the circumstances of their mishap.

CHAPTER X

Border Feuds.

The Battle of the Sark was fought
Hard by the Solway Firth;
But sure the victory was bought
For more than it was worth.

Bickerings at home and broils domestic had made so much ado for Richard II. and Henry IV., that Scotland had been disregarded for some years. Wat Tyler had been put down, and the bloody dagger added to the dexter chief of the city of London arms; the war of the Roses had commenced; the Duke of Lancaster had returned from banishment, and had deposed his cousin; Owen Glendower had been chastised; and now that the Scotch had been taking advantage of these commotions by ravaging the northern counties of England to such an extent as to be no longer endurable, Henry projected an expedition into the Highlands. He proceeded as far as

Edinburgh, where he summoned Robert III. to do homage for his crown, much after the precedents of his predecessors; and, three weeks having elapsed, finding that the red-shanks would neither fight him or allow him to fight them, but preferred retiring to their mountains with their cattle, he veered about once more for his own country, and disbanded his army.

Scotland was suffering severely from internal commotions; the Earl of Buchan had been evil entreating the land at the head of his *catterenes* or Caledonian banditti; and the Duke of Albany had removed one obstacle between himself and the throne, by starving his eldest nephew, David, to death, in prison. Robert, being duly advertised of the wicked design of his brother the Duke, and fearing lest his only remaining son, James, should share a like fate, in which event, Albany would succeed to the sovereignty if he outlived him, the king secretly despatched a vessel containing the prince his only heir, purposing to send him to the care and protection of the court of France; but, alack, and wellaway! the vessel was captured off Flamborough Head by a privateer, and James, who was then no more than nine years old, was borne away in triumph to Henry IV. of England, and committed to the Tower.

The tidings of this piteous affair killed Robert III. in three days.

Although forays and local skirmishes on the borders never ceased to give employment to the Dalesmen and Deucalidonians, yet, for many years succeeding the death of Robert, the governments did not formally enter upon a national warfare. They had other matters to attend to, and, therefore, let each other alone.

The powers of England had long been turned into a different channel: France had been won out of the hands of her monarch and people by the armies of Henry V.; and then, by a sudden revolution in fortune, that wonderful woman, the Maid of Orleans, had beaten the English precipitately off every hyde of land in the country. The quarrels of the White and Red Roses had, by this time, become a serious affair: Henry VI. and Edward IV. had met with various success on the battle field, and had alternately been inhabiting, now the palace and now the prison: and it was not until after the battle of Touton, when the Lancastrians were defeated, and Henry fled to Scotland to crave the protection of James III., that this northern kingdom again arose as a notable object to the attentions of Englishmen.

But he did not long remain in his lurking place; for he rushed out into open day and the face of his enemies, from whom he received various fortune during the vicissitudes of times sequent.

On the septentrional side of the border, "the sun of Douglas set in blood:" that great family had become so powerful, and too often so disaffected, that the nobles, as well as the prince, had doomed it to destruction. The sixth Earl and his brother were murdered in Edinburgh Castle; James II. poignarded the successor of these with his own hand at Stirling: and the next who enjoyed the title, unable any longer to maintain his authority, was defeated, first at Arkinholme in Annandale, and afterwards at Burnswark near Dumfries, where he was made prisoner by a son of Kirkpatrick of Closeburn, one of his quondam vassals.

"The Battle of the Sark," so called, wherein we come directly upon the boards of our drama, was fought in 1447, when the English met with a remarkably similar fate to that which we have elsewhere related, when their immense host, was scared into the waters by a mere handful in comparison.

The mighty English took exceptions at the Scottish monarch, and fell at jars with his majesty because he chose to select a wife for himself, forsooth! at the suggestion of Charles of France. It is not likely that the English had any scheme for a marriage at Gretna, which the new match never hinted at; but in matters of marriage England always likes to be father, mother, guardian, and

everything else, over foreign princes and princesses, and to give their wards away just as England pleases: and as foreign princes and princesses don't like on every occasion to succumb to this un-understandable authority, they venture to choose for themselves, without asking consent of their testy and domineering would-be great grandmamma.

To chastise the rough-footed Scots for their presumption, the Earl of Salisbury crossed over the western marches by the Sands of Burgh, and made for the town of Dumfries: in this he committed certain excesses, such as oftentimes attend on the steps of war; and, by way of a crowning mercy, he set the place in flames, and burnt it to the ground.

The Earl of Northumberland invaded the Merse, and amused himself by doing the same to Dunbar at the same time; but, as his exploits were not celebrated on our own particular arena, we must not wander from our subject to celebrate them here. As there were heroes who lived before Agamemnon, so there were historians who lived before us; and, for all we know, they have recorded the rare deeds which have been done by great men, whether within, without, or round about Dunbar.

In return for the compliment of the Earl of Salisbury at Dumfries, Sir John Douglas of Bal-

veny marched into Cumberland, and made reprisals by plundering or destroying all he could come near, whether of person or property. This was an amiable way, surely, of making things square between them.

The English armies, in high dudgeon that their foes should dare to murder and rob, even as they had just been doing, hastened back into their own country, only to levy still greater forces, that they might commit still greater excesses; and now, under the commandment of the Percy out of Northumberland, together with "*Magnus with the red mane*," as the Scots called this lieutenant, owing to a prodigiously long, bushy, and carroty beard, they prepared to carry ruin over Solway Moss and the river Sark. This Magnus was a soldier of fortune, who had been serving in the French ranks on the continent of Gaul, because he had nothing else to do for recreation; and, much like most other volunteers who enlist for the same reason, he was always ready to hit at anybody who came nearest, or most comfortably within arm's length. It mattered little to him who it might be; for as he fought for amusement, and out of the pure delight he derived from flinging his steel brand about him, the first who came was always the first that was served.

This soldier had an indifferent good sort of

opinion of his great manhood, not thinking meanly of himself, or of his abilities in the art of jesting with an enemy; and being well inflated with this buoyant self-assurance, he is said to have demanded from the English court no other recompense for the martial achievements which he was about to perform, than that he should enjoy and call his own all the broad acres (or counties peradventure) that he meant to conquer in Scotland. With such an opportunity of winning unto himself an immeasurable territory, who indeed would not fight with a strong arm? and, of a truth, he had fully purposed to lay about him with no sparing hand, but with infinite willingness to dispense his courtesies unto all whom it might concern.

An it be that Magnus, who drew his blade under the Percy's banner in this expedition, did not fight for money, (which is the meanest possible form in which to receive recompense,) he, at least, was not fired with the high and refined notions of disinterested patriotism, such as we have been essaying to inculcate.

The Scotch, having had timely intimation of the invasion, raised a numerous army to oppose it, the chief commanders being George Douglas, Earl of Ormond, Wallace of Craigie, and the Lords Maxwell and Johnston.

The English multitude trampled down the reeds

on the banks of the Eden and the Esk, and the moss, fern, and heather, upon the flats of the Solway; the warriors were enforced to wet their shoon as they forded the Sark, for the neat stone bridge which now spans the stream was not built then.

They forthwith proceeded to lay waste the whole of this matrimonial district, in which they succeeded, if not to admiration, at least to wonderment; and they made no scruple of seizing, plundering, or enthralling, every borderer they could come near. But it was declared that the Earl of Ormond was marching down upon them from the north with vast expedition; wherefore the invaders hastily called in their straggling parties, and encamped upon the banks of the river, which is now spanned by that bridge which has borne more lovers than any other bridge in Christendom—or Pagandom either.

Their advanced guard was commanded by Magnus aforesaid, who fought as disinterestedly for his sovereign as many others had done before him, and as many others continue to do after him; the Earl of Northumberland led on the centre; and the rear, which was composed mostly of Welsh, now fully under the yoke of England, was headed by Sir John Pennington.

The Scotch, by this time within sight, and bravely marshalled in battle array, drew up in

three divisions also, face to face, and almost within spear's length. Their right wing was commanded by Wallace, the left by Maxwell and Johnston, and the centre by Ormond himself. Before the strife of weapons began, this last nobleman harangued his naked-kneed followers with much eloquence, using forcible words to inflame their resentment against the new comers, by declaring that they had violated the existing truce, and that they merited nothing but hard blows, and those, too, not given with the flats of their swords. The signal was made, and with great impetuousity the right wing under Wallace rushed upon the antagonist van led by Magnus. At first the English archers gained a slight advantage; but the valour of Wallace, his example in lancing forward into the thickest of the fight, together with certain cheering words which he broached on the occasion, served to turn the fortune of the day in his favour, and especially to make Magnus look small, and his conquered acres still less. The encounter now became general; and such was the rigour, animosity, and fierceness of the Scots, that no effort could drive them back; the advantage they had gained they held to stoutly, and still continued to gain more and more. Magnus fell dead, bravely contending to the last; and the English, seeing their champion overthrown, and seeing the divisions under Northumberland and

Pennington completely routed, gave up all for lost, and fled away toward the Solway. It chanced to be high tide, so that the brine of the sea, flowing up into the channel of the Sark, covered the fords and filled the banks of the river to the topmost verge; and in these swollen waters the panic-stricken vanquished were drowned by multitudes.

Lord Percy, Northumberland's eldest son, Sir John Pennington, Sir Robert Harrington, and others, were made prisoners. The English lost at least three thousand men; whilst the Scots missed but six hundred, and none of them of consideration saving Wallace, who died of his hurts three months afterwards.

CHAPTER XI.

Treaty of Peace between James IV. of Scotland and Henry VII. of England.—Minority of James V.—His Adventures in disguise.—The Gaberlunzie Man.

King James the Fifth in Scotland reign'd
Like many other kings;
He did some common-place affairs,
And divers curious things.

After the fall of the House of Douglas, no one chieftain seems to have been especially potent on the Borders until some time further, when the sixth Earl of Angus, ycleped *Bell-the-Cat*, made rapid strides to power. He was Warden of the east and middle marches, Lord of Liddesdale and Jedwood forest, and possessed of the strong castles of Tantallon, Douglas, and Hermitage.

Respected more for his lineage than for his virtues, he found a large body of the nobility of the land, who thought more of lineage than virtue, ready so far to obey his treasonable behests as to assail, with him, the foundations of the throne, on which sat James III: and, in fine, matters came to such a pass, that the disaffected assembled an

army with which they attacked and slew the king, near the village of Bannockburn, where Bruce, in aforetime had achieved worthier things. James's army was composed of Highlanders, who could in no wise resist the men of Annandale and Liddesdale, who carried spears two ells longer than those used by the rest of their countrymen.

James IV. was a vigorous, energetic, and active prince, but head-strong and self-opiniated—failings which at last proved his ruin. A treaty of perpetual peace was concluded between him and Henry VII. of England in 1503, and by way of cementing the good understanding, he wedded at Edinburgh (not at Gretna) Margaret the eldest daughter of this king. In the subsequent reign of Henry VIII., a series of complaints were brought against some Scots abroad, who were blowing upon the embers of an ancient quarrel they had had with the Portuguese, and which had nearly died out. With this the English had had nothing to do; but as its reviviscence now clashed with English interests, it brought about a rupture, which was never thoroughly made up.

James invaded England in 1513, and was defeated: and on the 9th of September in the same year, contrary to the advice of all his councillors of war, he encountered his newly declared enemies at Flodden Field, where he was slain.

During the minority of James V., Scottish

affairs were in a most troublous and disordered state: the nobles were ignobly plotting against each other and the regency: the Queen mother was counterplotting against them; the chieftains on the borders were devouring each other by rapine and violence; and the English of Cumberland and Northumberland, not unassisted sometimes by the government, were cruelly ravaging the Merse, the Debateable Land, and all the parts adjacent, so that, as Cardinal Wolsey observed, "There was left neither house, fortress, village, tree, cattle, corn, or other succour for man."

The piratical system of moss-trooping was now in its meridian; as regularly as the sun set, parties of marauders set out to plunder their neighbours of their beeves and sheep, which parties, if pursued, fled to the fastnesses of Tarras Moss, or the Debateable Land; the dislocated government had no power, or no inclination to check this state of things; and by this time, the thieves of Annandale and Liddesdale had become notorious.

James V., like the eastern king in the Arabian Nights, took much pleasure in paying visits to his unsuspecting subjects muffled up in the dark features of disguise. He would habit himself in the vesture of a country loon, and enter the kitchen of the farmer's gudewife, with whom he would hold discourse on the prospects of the coming harvest, the treatment of landlords, and the government of the

king; or he would assume the tatters of a gaberlunzie man, and try the courtesy and alms-giving of the noble, gentle, and simple, as his fantasy directed.

There appear to have been two motives for the adoption of this practice: in the first place, he was naturally enamoured of romance, sport, and adventure; and in the second place, such was the inefficiency of deputies in the correction of abuses, such the feebleness of the administrators of justice, as compared with the power of the turbulent, such the intrigues of the barons in plotting and counterplotting against himself and each other, and such the difficulty in coming at the real truth in regard to the condition of his people in distant parts of his kingdom, that he resolved personally to visit such places as he was desirous of gaining knowledge about, and to see into the actual amount of existing grievances with his own eyes.

In the amusing prosecution of these adventures, he unreservedly went into either the hall of the castle, pertaining to any of his noble retainers, or into the hut of the cotter who dwelt on the moor. To these last, his peregrinations were most especially directed, so that at last he was styled, "The king of the poor."

That the royal author of the *Gaberlunzie Man* was also the hero of the exploit therein so blithely chanted, is a point on which antiquaries are pretty well agreed. If he has not received con-

viction of its paternity from circumstantial evidence, at all events, sentence has been unanimously passed on him from "habit and repute," as the Scottish men of law say.

One cold night during the inclement season of the year, as the gudewife of a certain cotter was busied about her domestic matters, assisted by a comely maiden, her daughter, there came to the door an ancient-looking man dressed in beggar's weeds. After bidding her many good den good e'ens, he besought her of her courtesy to give him lodging, until he could again proceed on his peregrination.

The laws of hospitality were such, that she needed no second request, but incontinently granted to him her welcome, her vivers,—those indeed that might be found in her scantily furnished cupboard,—and also a resting-place for the night.

Thus received, he sat down by the fire with hearty good will, for he was wet with the recent shower; his spirits rose, he brightened up at the thought of his comfortable quarters; and by way of making acquaintance with the daughter, he patted her on the shoulder—a liberty in so old a man that was readily pardoned. So high indeed did the ebullition of his gaiety effervesce, that he irresistibly burst forth in melody, and joyously vociferated divers excellent songs.

It is not the cassock nor the hood that will

make the holy monk, nor the veil that will make the unspotted vestal, nor the superfine coat that will make the modern gentleman, nor the tattered weeds that will make the penniless beggar.

Never mind; here was a supposed old gaberlunzie that needed victuals and shelter; and for these necessaries he, in return, did all he could to amuse his entertainers.

Either his merry sayings, or his pleasant tales of adventure, so divertingly narrated to the maiden, or else the discovery that she might have made, of his not being the uncomely wight he had represented, or else, in addition to this, the few sweet words which he slily poured into her ears when the mother was at the further end of the kitchen; these, some or all of them, so wrought upon the ardency of her youthful heart, that his society and his converse had now become intensely agreeable to her, so that she did not know how she should ever again be able to do without them.

The good easy mother little suspected the change that had suddenly come o'er the spirit of her daughter, and dreamt not of the nature of the turn their dialogue had taken.

He declared to her that he would willingly go with her to the world's end, whithersoever the fates should direct: and she, having been absolutely poisoned by the delicious venom of his protestations, confessed that she was dead to every

care but love, and would blindly follow him, even where, when, and how he should choose to lead.

Affairs had now arrived at a somewhat critical position.

Between these two a plot was concocted; the purpose of which was, that they should both elope and escape away together in the middle of the night.

Alas for love! it is a glorious passion when it is wise and well directed; but if it is suffered to run wild, it will ofttimes lead its slaves into sore perplexities.

They arose a short time before the cock crew; they carefully lifted the latch of the door, and then, finding themselves withoutside, they closed it behind them, and fled away into the wilderness.

Oh, the unbounded liberty of the wilderness! Ye may wander north, south, east, west, up and down, right and left, free, unfettered, unimpeded; ye may also knaw roots and grubs, if bakers' shops fail; or ye may starve upon nothing, and die in a quagmire,—and nobody know anything about it.

When the bright eye of the sun opened upon the hills in the morning, then did the gudewife open her eyes also; leisurely she lifted herself from her pallet, and leisurely, says the chronicle, did she put her vestments about her.

Her first hospitable solicitude was to know how

the gaberlunzie had slept; wherefore she took her course toward the servant's room which had been given up to him. On entering therein, she found it empty; she proceeded further with a sentiment of astonishment springing up within her; she went to the bed where he had lain; the straw was cold —the beggar had vanished.

She wrung her hands, she raved, she filled the house with lamentations loud and deep; every one was in a stir, and troubled with a thousand conjectures.

Some, in affright, ran to the coffers to see whether anything had been stolen; others ran to the cupboards and chests, in order to assure themselves of the extent of the robbery that had been committed on them. Nothing, howbeit, was missing. Everything was safe, perfect, and in its place as afore.

Thus relieved in apprehension, though still perplexed with the greatest wonderment, the mother returned in some degree to her senses. She breathed freer, she ceased her sorrowings, and she assuaged her tears.

"Since nothing is missing as we can see," said she to her servant maid, "since the churn in the dairy is safe, and the milk untouched, go now and awaken my daughter, and bid her come hither."

Alack then, if it must be so; now the real amount of her affliction must be revealed.

The servant went to the maiden's room, but had not one half crossed the floor, ere she was stricken with as much amazement as ever had troubled the whole household just before.

"The sheets were cold and she was away," says the ancient and royal historiographer: and the servant came screaming back to her mistress, declaring that, forsooth, she was off with the Gaberlunzie man!

Now then did a thousand distracting passions cruelly torture every dweller in that habitation. The old woman well nigh went out of her wits; she hastily resolved on divers plans for pursuing the fugitives, sometimes this way, sometimes the other, in any or every likely direction in which they may have fled; but so sorely racked was she with fears and vexations, that although she formed these plans of pursuit, and although she desired eagerly to undertake them herself, still, as she could not guess as to which way they might have gone, and as she wished every known road explored, and as she could not take every one of them her single self, she became at last so confused, so anxious, and so bewildered, that she could do nothing at all in the matter.

She hurried some on horseback to ride the country over, and some she despatched to run off through by-roads and crooked paths, to look, to search, to hunt, to inquire.

She never thought of despatching any one to Gretna; but Gretna was nothing then. No matter, they had not gone to Gretna—at least, we do not know for certain whether they had or not; at all events, they had not gone to the village of Springfield, for as we said before, they had fled into the wilderness.

Still, says the chronicle, she never ceased to curse and to ban: and according to her commandments, seconded by the anxiety of the whole establishment, her vassals never ceased to ride and to run.

Truth, however, will at last prevail; and mystery, deception, mistake, and ignorance, will have an end.

In a most secluded and retired glen, "where none could see," the ancient gaberlunzie-man and the young maiden were at last discovered, comfortably enjoying the solace of a country life: they were sporting away the time in loving discourse, and, at the moment of discovery, were discussing their vivers, for we are told that they were cutting a slice from a new cheese.

So content were they with the issue of the exploit and with each other's society, that he vowed to love her for aye with words most ardent; and she positively declared that certainly and truly, she should be very loth to leave him:

she confessed it honestly—she would not conceal it—she did allow, most sincerely, that she should be much grieved to leave him.

"But," added she with some apprehension, "if my mother knew that I were now with you greatly would she indeed be troubled."

"My dear," quoth he in return, "harbour no fears and no misgivings on her account. You have not yet learnt the beggar's dialect, such as will enable you to accompany me from town to town, and pleasantly to carry on the gaberlunzie traffic. Mislike me not for what I have done. I will earn thee bread by my industry and the sale of my wares: my spinnels and quhorles, and other matters of merchandise, together with the love we bear each other, will carry us to the world's end—and back again if we list. I will bow my leg, and crook my knee, and draw a black patch over my eye, so that folks shall say I be crippled and blind: and this disguisement, shown up to the inspection of the King's lieges (who, in his chevisance, will be blinder than we), shall be a rare subject for merriment with us. Whilst pity and alms be the meed that they will plentifully shower upon the old gaberlunzie-man, we will sing in the security of our secret, and be blithesome."

What could she do? how could she help it?

If she had been reluctant to comply, she could not have refrained; but not being one whit reluctant, she did not even try to refrain.

How sweet are the words of those who urge us to do the very thing we desire!

If the facetious monarch honestly restored the gudewife to her peace, and the maiden to her home, after he had satisfied his liking for adventure, he made her taste happiness indeed, after the anxiety whereinto he had at first plunged her: and if tricks and practical jokes be unwise to play, the least that can be afterwards done is, to make an ample amends. But it is dangerous to play with young ladies' hearts. Some fancy that their hearts are very tough, and will bear a deal of pulling about: this is a mistake: they are made of egg-shell, and are easily crushed.

CHAPTER XII.

The Widow of Annandale, Sir John Charters, and the King.

The story of the widow told
That lived in Annandale:
It does much credit to the king,
And is a goodly tale.

When the king was progressing through the south-western counties of Scotland, for the purpose of noting the depredations of the moss-troopers round about Solway, a widow, who lived by the water of Annan, came to him one day with a piteous tale of injury done to her by some lawless Southrons. She told him that a party of these cruel foes had made an incursion over the border, had attacked her house in passing through the dale, and had brought irreparable ruin and calamity upon her, by carrying off her son and her two cows. The former was her last support—the latter her entire property. She fur-

ther said, that she had, immediately on the receipt of this wrong, gone to his majesty's warden of the Western Marches, Sir John Charters, of Amisfield, informing him of all that had befallen; feeling not only sure that he would succour her against the common enemy of the country, as an act of friendly justice, but that he would readily proceed to take vengeance on the invaders, as a duty which he, the warden, owed to the king his master, in fulfilment of his office. The party, at the moment of her application, was still ravaging the district only a few miles from Amisfield; and she had urged him to go in quest of the depredators, and dispossess them of their foully gotten booty.

Sir John, howbeit, was not a trustworthy servant. Instead of protecting James's lands from herriment, and James's people from insult, he preferred the luxury and ease of banqueting merrily within his castle walls. Sir John treated the widow with contempt; he jeered at her losses; laughed at her complaint; and rudely dismissed her from his presence.

When these things had been laid before the king, the fire of honest anger arose within his bosom. He comforted her by saying, that he would shortly be in Annandale; that he would not forget her evil usage; that he would get justice done to her; and moreover, that justice

should also be done to this traitorous warden, who cared not to do his duty either to his country or to his liege.

With a light heart the gudewife returned home to abide James's coming into those parts.

A short time after he proceeded thitherward.

On arriving at the head of Nithsdale, he left the greater number of his retainers behind him, and secretly advanced to the village of Duncow: here, again, he assumed a more perfect disguise, for the purpose of better achieving his meritable design. He dismissed all his attendants saving only two or three, and dressing himself in a foreign habit, he directed his way immediately to the castle of Amisfield, the residence of the warden. When he came to the small brook that ran hard by the building, he advanced entirely alone right up to Amisfield gate.

On seeing the porter, he addressed him with some urgency of manner, requesting him to go to Sir John Charters, and say that the English had crossed the Debateable Land with no friendly intention, and that if the loyal warden and protector of King James's Marches would repel these bloody heralds of slaughter, he must at once up and be doing.

The porter, knowing his master's humour, declared to the stranger, that he was passing loth to disturb him; but this reluctance was speedily

over-ruled when the king put a silver groat into his hand—and so he went.

In a few minutes he returned, saying that Sir John had just sat down to dinner, and that forsooth he would not be interrupted.

This indifference about protecting the land from invaders, was no great proof of devotion to his country and prince; and to make this essay, had now indeed been the monarch's scheme.

This time he bribed the porter with two groats, desiring him to go once more to his master, and to say, that the general safety of the country depended on his directly firing the beacons, alarming the neighbourhood, and assembling his rentallers.

The knight, upon this second message, flew into a great rage, and threatened to punish the troublesome messenger for his temerity, if he did not leave the castle gate and depart.

But James had not yet done. He sought out another servant, (for the first was too terrified to go of any more errands,) and him he induced, through the potency of gold, to proceed to the banquet hall, and tell the Warden that *the gude man of Ballengeigh* had been waiting a long space at his gate for admittance, but in vain.

During the interval of the transmission of this message, he threw off his rude attire that covered and concealed the rich vestments of the king of

Scotland, and sounded a shrill blast on his bugle horn, as a signal for his attendants to come up.

This act is celebrated in the ballad of the *Jollie Beggar*, a ballad of his own writing.

"He tuke a horn frae his side, and blew baith loud and shrill,
And four-and-twenty belted knights came skipping o'er the hill."

We are assured that Sir John Charters was no stranger to the title of the "*gude man of Ballengeigh*," and that as soon as this third mission had been taken to him, he fell into a sore perplexity and a most piteous troublement. He felt like one who had suddenly put himself into infinite jeopardy; — not through weakness or frailty or misfortune, which might be excused, but through a dereliction of duty and an act of absolute treason. And his king too, was actually at the gate, and had been witness to it all!

There was no alternative; he could not shun James's presence. With a guilty conscience, a cowed aspect, and a faltering step, he came out to the barbican.

The high-spirited and offended king now sharply reprimanded him for his criminal abuse of the important trust that had been committed to his charge and fidelity; and bringing to his recollection the case of the poor widow, he commanded him to indemnify her tenfold for her loss—aye tenfold. He further added, that if her son were

not ransomed within less than a fortnight, he, the offending warden, should assuredly be hung up by the neck.

This public servant was not immediately dispossessed of his office; but as a further token of the royal displeasance, James punished Sir John in a way which proved severe, but at the same time carried along with it a ludicrous idea. He ruined the knight whilst he conferred an honour upon him. He billeted his retinue consisting of two thousand barons and feudatories, upon him, obliging him to maintain them during the whole of his sojourn in Annandale. The expenses which this honour brought upon him were so ruinous, that the Amisfield family are said never to have extricated themselves out of their encumbrance.

CHAPTER XIII.

History of John Armstrong, the famous Border Outlaw.

John Armstrong was John strong i'th' arm,
And lived upon the borders;
It seems he thought there was no harm
In stirring up disorders.

The Debateable Land and a great part of Liddesdale constituted the ancient territories pertaining to the powerful clan of the Armstrongs. The chief was Armstrong of Mangertoun, until, at a later period it became what was termed a broken clan, or one not having any lawful head who could become surety for the good behaviour of all the rest.

Johnie Armstrong, the hero of this chapter, was the brother of the Laird of Mangertoun, and dwelt in a turreted building at the Hollows, a few miles from Langholm. The roofless, but picturesque ruins of this tower are yet to be seen in the vale, overgrown with fern and moss, and surrounded by wild and delightful scenery.

During the greater part of the reign of James V., the era to which we refer, the kingdom of Scotland was in a most troublous state of misgovernment—not so much from the ignorance or deficiency of

the king himself, as from the ambitious and turbulent servants by whom he was encompassed.

The dissensions prevailing amongst the nobles, who directed the affairs of the nation during his minority, began to grow to such an insufferable pitch, that all orders—and even *dis*orders of men —became wearied and disgusted; wherefore they compelled these unwise rulers to give up their trust, wherein they could no longer be trusted, and to put the reins of guidance into the hands of the youthful prince, who discovered at an early age a most rare and vigorous intellect.

The activity and intrepidity of James's character led him to embrace this proposition with great good will; but on leaving Stirling, where he had been educated, and repairing to his capital, he discovered that he was to be sorely shackled in the exercise of the sovereign authority by four associates, in the persons of my Lord Hamilton, the Archbishop Beaton, and the Earls of Lennox and Angus.

These haughty peers, much to his chagrin, enforced him to dismiss from his society, his early preceptor Sir David Lindsay, and his much loved friend Bellenden, together with divers others toward whom they bore feelings both of jealousy and envy.

Howbeit, these rapacious governors in a short-time clashed amongst themselves and achieved

their own ruin,—a spirit and practice of contention that ended in the ascendancy of Angus, and the banishment of all the others from Court.

This Earl, now finding himself alone, and holding the monarch but as a mere child, soon became far too oppressive, too despotic, and too imperious in his deportment for endurance. The prince succeeded in secretly fomenting two several rebellions in his own favour; and at last, in a moment of intermitted watchfulness, he contrived, in his fifteenth year, to break from his keepers and fly to the Castle of Stirling back again.

Shutting himself up there, he sent for many of the chief barons of his kingdom, and laid before them the hateful state of subjection in which he had been held by Angus and his kinsmen; declared that now he had escaped from his tyranny, he would eschew it for ever: and "vowed that Scotlande sould na hold thame both."

There was a display of vast resolve and determination in this; and it is not a matter of marvel, that these lords, angered at the recollection of former neglect and former wrong, worked upon them by Angus, should protest violent loyalty for their king, and advise vengement to be done to their enemy.

At their recommendation, this puissant earl and his kinsmen were cited to abide the issue of a legal trial; but having failed to appear to answer

the charges against them, the whole race of Douglas was banished the realm for treason towards the king's majesty.

James was now his own master—a position in which all men love to stand.

Notwithstanding his extreme youth, the acuteness of his judgment, the decision of his mind, and the vigor of his understanding, enabled him, without the tutorage of instructors, to recover the country from disorder, to rescue his people from oppression, and to dispense order amongst all grades of men. The wisdom of his measures, the firmness of their decision, and the promptitude of their execution, rise up as a subject of just wonder, when we take into consideration his tender years, and the difficulties which he had to encounter.

He was of opinion, that his own presence in various parts of the country, where the disorders were greatest, would serve better than any other plan whatsoever, for the more speedy and decided administration of justice, for the apprehension of the vile banditti that ravaged the Border most especially, and for the extermination, in other districts, of certain bands of outlaws, plunderers, and such like.

Wherefore, to this end, he now made a beginning. He did not blazon his purpose abroad; but rather made it his policy to harbour his intentions within his own bosom, giving out that he dearly

loved hunting and hawking, and that for the better enjoyment of these sports, he would visit the distant wildernesses of the land. Collecting, then, a large body of nobles about him, together with their numerous vassals, he made certain progresses into those places where the quarry might be most abundant.

Of his progress into Liddesdale, we have more particularly to discourse on; and the quarry on which he here swooped so dispiteously, was the evil-fated Johnie Armstrong.

The rapacity of this clan, and of their allies the Elliots, had, in time become proverbial in the mouths of men: "Elliots and Armstrongs," said they, "ride thieves all." That, however, they should have been thieves all, appears to have been a fact not very extraordinary, and Sir Walter Scott shrewdly inquires to what family there, it would *not* apply: — "But to what Border family of note, in former days," says he, "would not such an adage have been equally applicable?"

The ruins of their numerous towers and other strong places of abode, are still discoverable along the banks of the Liddel: but on these fastnesses they did not by any means rely, when danger, in the form of a powerful foe, might visit this glen. Then, indeed, they abandoned their habitations, and retired into the neighbouring morasses, through the intricacies of such narrow paths as were known only to themselves.

Tarras Moss, so called, is allowed to have been one of their chiefest places of refuge; a moss through which a small rivulet takes its course, and all around abounding in desolation and drearriment.

Some few patches of dry and available ground lie scattered along its banks, and upon these the outlaws and their families lived in their temporary sheds or tents, until such time as the storm should be overblown. So deep is the moss, that, according to an ancient warrior's very natural mode of admeasurement, we are told that at the era in question, not two spears tied together, could pierce through it down to the bottom.

In a skirmish on this spot in 1588, with the Earl of Angus, the Armstrongs eluded every exertion of the peer against them, albeit he prided himself not a little in his supposed skill in hunting thieves; and they succeeded in driving him off, and of capturing his relation, Douglas of Ively.

But good fortune is a blessing of uncertain tenure, and those who feast upon it to-day, may perchance fast to-morrow.

Surely Sir Robert Cary, sometime Warden of the West Marches, relates how he went out and encamped against them, and how he desisted not until he had done them grievous evil.

In one of their incursions, they had made pastime by plundering the town of Haltwhistle, on the confines of Cumberland; so that the English

knight sent to the king of Scotland to advertise him thereof, and to demand satisfaction for an outrage so very unwarrantable. But the king, not over proud of such subjects, would not confess them as his own: he said that these moss-troopers did not belong to him, and that if they had offended the English, Sir Robert might take upon himself to chide them if he would.

So much did this vow terrify the inhabitants of all the English towns in those parts, that the chief men in them conferred together, and went in a body to Sir Robert Cary, Warden of the West Marches at this notable time, to wit, in the year 1598, and declared unto him, that unless he would assist them in some effectual mode to countercheck these ravagers during the summer, and before the dreaded winter should arrive, that they would not abide the bloody hazard of remaining in their dwellings, but would fly the country and seek their own safety.

Upon this complaint, the warden called the country gentlemen of note to his castle, and debated with them what was best to be done in such a stress; when it was unanimously agreed, that nothing was left but to proceed to hostile measures. Their counsels further urged the warden to accept of one hundred horsemen pertaining to the Lord Ewrie, in addition to his own guard of forty; and as this would scantly be sufficient,

to petition her majesty the Queen Elizabeth, for one hundred more, to be sent down from London city to them.

Some of these advices were embraced and others eschewed; but, as many lusty juvenals of gentle blood, to whom the spirit of chivalry had been bequeathed by their paladin fathers, flocked to the knight's banner, and enrolled themselves as volunteers, he took the field at the head of two hundred horsemen, well accoutered with halberds, rapiers, handguns, and petronels.

The chief of the outlaws was ycleped Sim of the Whitram, an ancient man yet sturdy, who had five or six brawny sons, and whose followers amounted in number to more than the force of Sir Robert Cary himself.

On the appointed day they marched into the Wastes, and were joined by the foot of Liddesdale above Gretna, a company composed of the garrison of Hermitage Castle in Scotland, belonging to King James the Sixth then reigning; for, on this occasion, the Scotch united with the English in the same campaign, as the Armstrongs were outlaws to both nations.

This being the case, they had enough to do to ward off the arms of chastisement lifted against them by two realms at once.

In the vicinage of Tarras Moss the English warden and his allies built a goodly fortilice, com-

passed about with lines of vallation, and mounted with divers smoky crackis of war: cabins wherein to dwell they also built, and every one brought his bed and his mattress to lie on.

Thus established, they abode patiently in the wilderness waiting for the enemy, from the middle of June until nearly the end of August in the aforesaid year 1598.

The outlaws, secure in the labyrinths of the moss, which was beset with many dangerous bogs and marsh grounds, troubled not themselves for the forces of either England or Scotland, singly or both together: for they knew that he who essayed to follow them, being ignorant of the safe places to tread, would walk in the same peril as one walking blindfold amongst fiery ploughshares.

Sir Robert Cary, in his own quaint narrative of this expedition, sets forth how they sent certain messages to him, as he lay there encamped, full of wit and infinite insolency; as, forsooth, that he (Sir Robert) was like the first puff of a haggis, hottest at first, when it is taken out of the pot and cut open; and that they bade him stay there until he should cool down by the winter's snow. As for themselves, they said that they would tarry in Tarras Wood till he was wearied of lying in the Waste: and that when he had had his time out, and they no whit the worse, they would then

play their parts toward him, such as should keep him waking all the next winter.

But victories are not gained by bluster or boast, or any particular show of great manhood:—the truth of this was bewrayed by the event.

However sure the warden felt within himself, that the force he had with him was fully sufficient to cope with his foes, he, nevertheless, declares that his friends in England who had not joined him, where somewhat less confident, and doubted of his success.

He was not idle during the time he stayed at the fort; but diligently busied both himself and his men in exploring all the paths that led over the morasses, and in casting about how to assail the red-shanked Scots to a vantage.

Through the safe conduct of a muffled man, that is, a guide in disguise, he succeeded in sending a hundred and fifty horsemen thirty miles up the country, round the further side of the Tarras, with great secresy and speed: and this manœuvre afterwards served him in good stead, for it effectually prevented all escape on that side, and not a little contributed to his victory.

These horsemen were divided into three parts, and stationed at the openings of three passages of which the Armstrongs had thought themselves quite secure, as a means of retreat further into Scotland on the north; but so privily had this

been done, that it was never discovered until too late to disregard.

A strong force from England now crossed over the Debateable Land, to join and co-operate with the first, the whole amounting to three hundred horse and one thousand foot; and these proceeded to attack the Tarras on the opposite side from where the other ambushes lay.

The scouts which the Armstrongs had placed round about on the tops of the hills to keep a look-out, incontinently gave the alarm. The English broke into the wood, and commenced the skirmish right hotly, so that the outlaws were enforced to retreat before them and leave their goods behind; they, however, held themselves to be in no great peril, as they purposed to make their way to Scotlandward by the other paths.

But, on emerging from the mouths of these, that they might attain to the mountains, they were stricken with infinite dismay when the horsemen started out of their concealments and set upon them.

Some fought, and some ran away into the perilous bogs, whither Sir Robert's men durst not follow for fear of losing themselves and getting smothered in the mud; but five of the principal of the outlaws were presently taken, amongst whom were two sons of *Sim of Whitram*.

These offenders were taken to the fort, together

with a quantity of baggage, and many sheep and kine that had been stolen from the gentlemen dwelling in their bastle-houses in those parts.

As these prisoners were held in great consideration amongst the outlaws, the warden was now enabled to bind them over securely to peaceable behaviour in all time coming: and having made them pledge themselves by bonds, as also many Scottish gentlemen of turbulent spirit, they were immediately restored to their liberty.

The fort was broken up, the whole forces marched away, and every man betook himself to his own home.

From this narrative of *Cary's Raid*, so called, and such other matters as have appeared in this chapter, the reader will understand how powerful a clan the Armstrongs were at so late a period; and it was not without reason that Johnie of Gilnockie was dreaded all along the border by those who opposed or angered him.

He levied black mail, or protection and forbearance money, upon the landowners for many miles round; since they, in their desire to conciliate him and the band of freebooters at his command, were fain to submit to this tax. His fame—or, under correction, his notoriety—had extended itself as far as Newcastle, and Johnie Armstrong was looked upon as the prince of moss-troopers.

In the year 1529, James V. progressed towards

the Solway, with the specious design of chasing the red deer through the brake, but with the actual intention of quelling the turbulent and of reducing the disobedient to order. In this instance, of which we now record the facts, he made a more warlike display; and, previously to setting out, he secured and imprisoned divers powerful barons that dwelt on the Marches, whom he suspected of countenancing the ravages of the outlaws, and, peradventure, of sharing the booty which they ofttimes took. Thus, the Earl of Bothwell of that day, was forfeited and confined in the castle of Edinburgh; the Lords of Home and Maxwell, the Lairds of Buccleuch, Fairniherst, and Johnston, were committed to ward; and Cockburn of Henderland, and Adam Scott of Tushielaw, commonly called the King of the Border, were publicly executed.

James then marched rapidly forward, at the head of a flying army of ten thousand men, through Ettrick Forest, Ewsdale, and other districts, dispensing admonition and correction to his subjects.

The **Kronykill** saith that the king wrote a loving letter to Armstrong with his own hand full tenderly, and begged that he would come and speak with him; and that after a conference held between his clan and the Eliots, it was unanimously decided that they should present them-

selves before his majesty, and conduct him joyfully to Gilnockie.

They felt no fear for their safety; first, because they went voluntarily of their own free will, and not constrainedly or culpably, as if they had been prisoners of war; and, secondly, because their depredations, although not sanctioned by the laws, had always been carried on, not against their own countrymen, but against the English, the ancient enemies of Scotland.

Even the soberest of Scottish historians are at a loss how to justify James in the course he took in this affair; as for ourselves, we will but briefly relate the facts, and leave the reader to exculpate or condemn the king, as it shall seem fit.

Tradition avows that certain evil counsellors advised Johnie to undertake his visit, fully aware of the peril into which he was journeying. Be this as it may, he determined to go, and made great preparations accordingly.

He directed that capon, rabbit, and venison, together with a store of plentiful hospitality, should be prepared at Gilnockie Tower for a banquet to be set before the royal guest: and then, placing himself at the head of thirty-six horsemen, mounted and arrayed in all the pomp of border chivalry, he sought the King's presence.

"When he entered in before the kinge," says

Pitscottie, "he cam verie reverentlie with xxiv* well-horsed able gentlmen withe him, verie richlie apparelled, trusting, that in respect he had cum to the kingis grace willinglie and voluntarilie, not being tain nor apprehendit be the kinge, he sould obtain the mair favour.

"Bot when the kinge saw him and his men so gorgeous in their apparell, and so manie braw men under ane tirrantis commandment, throwardlie he turned about his face, and bad tak that tirrant out of his sight, saying, 'Quhat wants yon knave that a kinge sould have?'

"Bot when Johne Armstrange perceaved that the kinge kindled in ane furie against him, and had no hop of his lyff, notwithstanding of manie great and fair offeris quhelk he offered to the kinge, that is, that he sould sustene himselfe with fortie gentlmen ever readie to awaitt upon his majestie's service, and never to tak a pennie of Scotlande nor Scottismen; secondlie, that thair was not ane subject in Englande, duik, earle, lord, or baron, bot within ane certain day, he sould bring ony of thame to his majestie, aither quick or dead; he, seeing no hop of the kingis favour towards him, said verrie proudlie, 'I am bot ane fool to seik grace of ane gracelesse face. Bot had I known, syr, that ye would have takyn my

* Authors are not agreed as to the number of his retinue. Sir Walter Scott says thirty-six, as above.

lyff this daie, I sould have leived uppon the borderis in despyte of Kinge Harrie [the Eighth] and you baith: for I know Kinge Harrie would down weigh my best hors with gold, to know that I war condemned to die this daie.'"

Without a hearing, without a chance given him for vindication, this chief was hurried away with his company, and hanged upon the living trees that grew thereby:

"Quhilk," adds the historian, "monie Scottismen heavilie lamented; for he was ane doubted man, and als gude ane chieftaine as evir was uppon the borderis, aither of Scotlande or Englande. And albeit he was ane lous leivand man, he nevir molested no Scottisman; bot 'tis said, that, from the Scottis border to Newcastle of Inglande, thair was not ane of quhatsoever estate bot paid to this Johne Armstrange ane tribut to be fre of his cumber, he was soe doubtit in Inglande."

The fate of this chief has perplexed, and indeed grieved, many persons since the black day on which it was perpetrated,—not only Scottishmen, who possibly might be prejudiced in his favour through national affection, but also by the sons of other soils, who could do no other than decide on the case from the facts laid before them. Either some false friend treacherously counselled him to repair to the king's presence,

foreknowing the risk; or else Johnie's evil genius invisibly urged him to the step, unwittingly, unconsciously on his part; or else some secret enemy instigated James to the act; or else James himself was in an ill humour that morning, and vented his spleen too precipitately on the first individual that came into his power; or else half-a-dozen other *elses*—no matter; but, certain it is, all chroniclers agree that something was wrong, and that the course of justice in the fair investigation of his past life and extent of crime, was not permitted to run on as it should have done.

The writers of that day were fond of singing his praises, and of bewailing his sad hap; a proof that he was held in great note whilst living, and grieved for when dead.

Sir David Lindsay of the Mount, in the curious play published by Mr. Pinkerton from the Bannatyne MS., introduces a pardoner, or knavish dealer in relics, who produces, among his holy rarities—

> "—The cordis, baith grit and lang,
> Qukilk hangit Johnie Armstrang,
> Of gude hempe, soft and sound,
> Gude haly pepil, I stand ford,
> Wha 'ever beis hangit in this cord
> Neidis never to be drowned!"

When he set out on his way to the king, together with his horsemen, the ladies waved their

kerchiefs to them from their windows, and bid them a happy return. Such was the splendour of their appointments, that James, taking them for the retinue of some great ambassador, and he at the head of them the plenipotentiary, raised his bonnet at their approach, to do them courteous reverence; but when the visitor's name was pronounced, the king was undeceived — and so was John Armstrong wofully himself.

"John wore a girdle about his middle,
Imbroidered o'er wi' burning gold;
Bespangled wi' the same metal,
Maist beautiful was to behold."

"There hang *nine* targets (tassels) at Johnnie's hat,
And *ilk* ane worth *three hundred pound*."

Such is the notice of his gordeous apparel in the ballad—a ballad that was taken down from the recitation of John's sixth lineal descendant, exactly preserved in the family as it had been composed soon after the catastrophe.

This severe act contributed to one end at all events: it produced tranquillity on the borders. Its very severity, perhaps, was the principal reason why it did so do; for it struck an unusual panic into the bosoms of all the freebooters in the country, and terrified them into silence, when, perchance, a less hard doom might only have aroused them.

"Thereafter there was great peace and rest a long time," says Pitscottie in alluding to this transaction, "wherethrough the king had great profit: for he had ten thousand sheep going in the Ettrick forest, in keeping by Andrew Bell, who made the king so good count of them, as they had gone in the bounds of Fife."

Such a mode of getting through the tedium of legal proceedings, obtained the proverbial phrase of *Jeddart Justice*, which signified trial after execution. On the far margin of the Atlantic shore, in modern times, the same thing is ycleped *Lynch Law*, after a certain judge of that name, who found it the quickest way of getting through a press of business. A similar proverb in England, of the same interpretation, is *Lydford Law*, derived from Lydford, a corporation in Devonshire, where, it seems, the same love of expedition prevailed. In Wescott's History of this county, the following lines occur:—

> "I oft have heard of Lydford Law,
> How in the morn they hang and draw,
> And sit in judgment after."

Satchells, who lived at such time when the Armstrongs were held in estimation for their power, thus speaks of them:—

> "On that border, was the Armstrongs, able men;
> Somewhat unruly, and verie ill to tame.

I would have none thinke that I call them thieves,
For if I did it would be arrant lies."

By this he means, that they were only freebooters, and that the fat beeves of which they relieved their neighbours, were lawful prizes, especially as they were mostly taken from the English, their enemies.

He continues:—

"Near a border frontier, in the time of war,
There's ne'er a man but he's a freebooter.
* * * * *
"Because, to all men it may appeare,
The freebooter he is a volunteer;
In the muster-rolls he has no desire to stay;
He lives by purchase, he gets no pay.
* * * * *
"It 's most clear, a freebooter doth live in hazard's train;
A freebooter's a cavalier that ventures life for gaine:
But since Kinge James the Sixth to Inglande went,
There has been no cause of grief;
And he that hath trangressed since then
Is no *Freebooter*, but a *Thief*."

This is a nice distinction between the two callings; the one being, according to him, just, fair, and honourable, whilst the other was highly disreputable.

The notion of *meum* and *tuum*, howbeit, of might over right, and the fact, that the possession only of a thing,—no matter how come by,—constituted a legal tenure, together with one or two

other such trifling distinctions, had become so impressed upon the belief of these liberty boys, that no sense of wrong was attached to the practice of a life of robbery and spoliation. By time, habit, necessity, and the tutorage of their sires, it had become the essence of their creed—a part of their natures; and we are assured that they never told their beads so diligently and so earnestly, as when they were on the eve of an expedition.

In the old drama of Sir David Lindsay, we perceive a notice of the long well known and universally admitted fact, that the inhabitants all around about Gretna—of the vales of Annan, Esk, Sark, and divers others—were noted thieves. One of these offenders, having fallen into the hands of justice, makes the following last dying speech to his fellows in crime :—

"Adew! my bruthir *Annan Thieves*,
That holpit me in my mischevis;
Adew! Grossars, Nicksonis, and Bells,
Oft have we fairne owrthrench the fells:
Adew! Robsons, Howis, and Pylis,
That in our craft has mony wilis:
Littlis, Trumbells, and *Armestranges;*
Adew; all *theeves* that me belangis;
Bailowes, Erewynis, and Elwandis,
Speedy of flicht, and slicht of handis;
The Scotts of Eisdale, and the Gramis.
I haif na time to tell your nameis."*

* Pinkerton's Scottish Poems, vol. ii. p. 156.

Verily, this is a truly pathetic farewell from one who was making his last dying speech and confession, even with the halter about his neck.

Common Thift, the character in this play who is thus executed, and in whom is centred the attributes of robbery, violence, and raptation, is thus lamented by his brother *Falset* (Falsehood), who is also brought out for condign punishment—*videlicet* :—

> "Waes me for thee, *gude Common Thift!*
> Was never man made more *honest* chift,
> His living for to win:
> There was not in all Liddesdaill,
> That ky mair craftily could steil,
> Whar thou hangis on that pin!"

According to Sir Walter Scott, one of the last Border-rievers was of this family, and lived so late as the beginning of the last century. After having made himself dreaded over the whole country, he at last came to an untimely, if merited, end. A person of large property lost twelve cows in one night; and, aroused up to action by a robbery so heavy, he called about him a posse from round about Teviotdale, and succeeded in tracing the felons to the house of this Armstrong, commonly called Willie of Westburnflat, from the place of his residence, on the banks of Hermitage water. Fortunately for the pursuers, he was then asleep, so that he was secured, along with nine of his friends, without much resistance.

He was brought to trial at Selkirk, not according to *jeddart-justice*, which by this time had grown somewhat fusty and obsolete, but according to the more modern process of jury, counsel, and judge, and a verdict of guilty pronounced against him and his accomplices.

When sentence was pronounced, Willie arose; and, seizing the oaken chair on which he was placed, broke it into pieces by main strength, and offered it to his companions; declaring, that if they would stand by him he would fight his way out of Selkirk with these weapons. But they held his hands, and besought him to let them *die like Christians*. They were accordingly executed in form of law.

The people of Liddesdale still consider the sentence as iniquitous; and, adds Sir Walter, "perhaps not erroneously:" and they also aver, that the prosecutor never throve afterwards, but came to beggary and ruin with his whole family.

CHAPTER XIV.

Dick o' the Cow, and the Laird's Jock.

This chapter tells ye how that Diek
Was jester by his trade;
And how he play'd a funny trick,
And ran a Border Raid.

THROUGHOUT the middle ages the clans of Liddesdale were notorious thieves: there was not a beefin, steer, milch-cow, or sheep, that was secure from deportation. Maitland's "Complaint" against these depredators, begins thus:—

"Of Liddisdail the eommoun theifis,
Sa peartlie steillis now and reifis,
That nane may keip
Horse, nolt, nor scheip,
Nor yett dar sleip
For their mischeifis."

This "Complaint" goes on to enumerate a flagitious synopsis of the "mischeifis" to which the circumjacent districts were subject;—to show

that no man in his house was safe from assault at any moment, or could call his possessions his own, with any assurance of certainty, from one hour to another; — and how those who were unable to beat off their sudden invaders, suffered robbery and spoliation as a thing of course.

Such a systematic usage of herriment was not restricted to the Western Marches, but prevailed more or less all along the whole line of the Roman vallation, as is plainly shown by reference to divers musty parchments, on some of which there appear ruinous lists of damages done with no sparing hand; — of castles, peels, strengths, and bastle-houses burnt or subversed, — of religious edifices demolished, — and of property of every kind carried away from the rightful owners.

In Haynes' State Papers there is an account of certain of these forays, and of the ruin that attended them. One list of the places spoliated enumerates as follows :—

"Monasteries and Freehouses	7
Castles, towers, and piles	16
Market townes	5
Villages	243 [!]
Mylnes	13
Spytells and hospitals	3"

A right notable catalogue of iniquities truly!

In the year 1586 a bill was fouled against the

Laird's Jock and others, by the deputy of Bewcastle, at a warden-meeting, for four hundred head of cattle taken by him in open foray from the Drysike; and in the year following, a complaint was made against this same personage, for the theft of fifty kine and oxen, besides furniture, to the amount of one hundred merks sterling.

Sir Walter of Abbotsford tells us that the Lord Evers and Sir Brian Latoun, during the year fifteen hundred and forty-four, committed the most dreadful ravages, compelling most of the inhabitants, and especially the men of Liddesdale, to take assurance under the king of England.

In August this year, the baron was pleased to harry the whole lands belonging to Buccleuch in West Teviotdale, without any courtesy or consideration whatsoever toward the dwellers thereon. He assaulted the tower of Branxholm, and burnt the barnkin or outworks: he took thirty of the clan of Scott prisoners whom he found therein, and eight others were done to death in the affray: and he carried off a rich booty in horses and sheep.

It is no matter of marvel that such visitations as this should kindle the ire of the attacked and injured party: even in the peaceful, orderly, and self-denying days of the nineteenth century, we could scarcely brook such treatment from our neighbours, but should assuredly feel a whit

tetchey against any who should so greet us and our possessions.

The same nobleman ignobly incursed soon after upon the lands of Kale Water, appertaining to the same chieftain; during which raid he plundered the fatness of the soil, even as he had done round about Branxholm, and killed one score and a half of Scotts. The Moss Tower, an especial fortilice near Eckford, was besieged right fiercely, and was "smoked very sore."

The king of England had promised to Evers and Latoun a feudal grant of the country which they had been reducing to a desert; upon hearing which, says the historian Godscroft, Archibald Douglas, the seventh Earl of Douglas, who was mightily incensed against them, because they had desecrated and defaced the tombs of his ancestors at Melrose, swore with terrible oaths that he would shortly write the deed of investiture upon their own skins,—and that, too, with steel pens and bloody ink.

They again entered Scotland, the year after their previous misdoings, at the head of three thousand mercenaries, fifteen hundred English borderers, and seven hundred Scottish mosstroopers, mostly Armstrongs, Turnbulls, and other broken clans, or such as had no acknowledged chieftain; and in this second incursion they out-Eversed Evers in cruelty: so that if it be conceded that

the notorious thieves of Liddesdale had won for themselves a name by their foul practices, there were those also dwelling on the south side of the Border, and who owned to another king, whose evil name merited to be just as flagrant. They set fire to the Tower of Broomhouse; and, according to Lesley, its lady, a noble and aged woman, together with all her family, were piteously consumed in the flames.

In Murdin's State Papers, the sum total of their depredations, as entered in the ledger of the baron stands thus:—

Towns, towers, barnekynes, paryshe churches, bastill-houses, burned and destroyed	192
Scots slain	403
Prisoners taken	816
Nolt (cattle)	10,386
Shepe	12,492
Nags and geldings	1,296
Gayt	200
Bolls of corn	850
Insight gear, &c. (furniture)	an incalculable quantity.

Both Evers and Latoun were killed at the battle of Ancram Moor, and a stop put to their depredations; but in those days and in those parts, plunderers arose like Hydra heads; so that no sooner were some cut off, than others speedily started up to supply their place.

The story of *Dick o' the Cow*, is of a more peaceful and less malicious cast, because, albeit it

was a chevisance of robbery, yet the circumstances attending it, and the manner of its doing, wore the complexion of banter and ludicrousness.

Thomas, Lord Scroop, warden of the Western Marches during the last dozen years of Elizabeth's reign, had a jester called *Dick o' the Cow*, by some supposed to have been the same with Ricardus Coldall, de Plumpton, a knight and celebrated warrior, but touching whose identity there appears to be very little in proof. This motley dresser and bearer of the bauble and cap-and-bells in my Lord's castle, suffered pillage from the Armstrongs of Liddesdale above Gretna, who one day visited him unexpectedly, as ye shall read.

Johnie Armstrong said to Willie, as they were discoursing together, that as they had been long at feud with England, and as their horses were getting fat and idle in the stable, it was right and fitting that they should arouse themselves from their inactivity, and make an excursion over the border for pleasant pastime and peradventure for booty. This proposal was no sooner broached on one side, than it was incontinently assented to on the other: so they mounted their steeds and pricked over the plain southward.

They first attained to Hutton Hall, a mansion in those parts; and having ridden around it to reconnoitre, they espied nothing but six sheep upon a lee—a prize not worth seizing upon. "I

had rather die in England," quoth Johnie turning away from them, "than that six sheep should go to Liddesdale with me.—But who was that man," he continued, changing the topic,—"we met even now as we came over the hill?"

"Oh," rejoined the other indifferently, "that same is an innocent fool, and they call him Dick o' the Cow."

"Then" said the first speaker, "that fool has three good cows of his own as any that be in Cumberland; and betide me life, or betide me death, these kine shall go to Liddesdale with me."

Having hastily proceeded to Dick's abode, they roughly battered at his walls until they had effected a wide breach; here they entered; and not content with stealing the three devoted cows, they also took three coverlets from his wife's bed.

This deed of great hardiment having been achieved they retraced their way homeward.

But the next morning the jester's wife made a discovery of what she thought to be no jest at all; wherefore she cried sorely with piteous sighs, and filled the empty house with lamentings shrill and long-continued.

"Nay, hold your tongue, gudewife," said he, "and do not let me hear more of this: for you may believe me in sooth, that for every cow that you have lost, I will bring you three." And with these words he hied him away to the Lord Scroop,

and told him how the thieves of Liddesdale had been to his house last night, and had robbed him without provocation, and ended by asking his master's permission to return like for like, and go and rob there.

After some chaffering betwixt them, the warden granted him leave to herry his foes, if he would promise to rob no one but those who had robbed him.

"There is my troth and my right hand," cried Dick: "my head shall hang on the hairibee, and I will never cross Carlisle sands again if I steal from any man that has not stolen from me."

He now bought a bridle and a new pair of spurs which he carefully concealed inside the legs of his breeches—for they were not intended to be used during his progress into Scotland, but rather during his progress home again. He merrily mounted his beast, spurred her over the Moss of Solway, through the domains of the present Gretna, then a barren waste covered with furze and heath, and so on till he came to Pudding-burn House, a place of strength held by the Armstrongs, and in which he found no less than thirty-three there assembled.

"Who is this comes here?" quoth one of the thieves. "Yet he is but an innocent fool, and we are three-and-thirty strong."

But the innocent fool walked boldly up to the

head of the board, courteously greeting the moss-troopers in these words;—"Good den, my good Laird's Jock: but the devil bless all your company! Johnie Armstrong and his billie Willie came to my house last night and stole three cows."

"Ha!" exclaimed the accused Johnie in anger, "we will hang this knave up by the neck that dares to beard us in our own hall."

"Yea," said Willie, the other culprit, "we will forthwith make worms' meat of him."

"Na," interposed another clansman, "we will rather give him a sound cudgelling with the pommel of a Jeddart-staff, and then turn him out."

"Rest you merry," cried the Laird's Jock, who is said to have been the best fellow of the company, "Sit down awhile, Dickie—make yourself well at ease—and I will give you a dainty morsel of your own cow to eat."

But this was a jest which the professional Jester could not swallow; so he withdrew in high dudgeon to a neighbouring peat-house, where he designed to sleep off his anger.

We are assured that the only orison that he prayed as he lay there was,—"I wish I had amends for my three good kine."

It was the custom of Pudding-burn House and at Mangerton, two principal seats pertaining to chiefs of this clan, not to wait dinner for anybody, —a proper custom enough, and one which is now-

a-days found to prevail amongst some few modern dinner-givers—but only amongst some few. It was also the custom, that if the company did not punctually attend to the first call, and assemble immediately, no second summons was given; those who lost no time in sitting down to the table had their meal, but those who were unpunctual, were enforced to go hungry, and tarry several hours until the next meal was served. This latter custom has emigrated to the United States of America.

Such a practice served to make every one alert so soon as the welcome subpœna was issued; and on the occasion of which we speak, the hungry horse-boy was no sooner called than he forthwith threw the key "abune the door-head," in his eagerness and precipitation, and hastened to devour his vivers.

This action was not lost upon Dick o' the Cow, who witnessed it as he lay in the peat-house; for it secured him an *entrée* into the stable amongst all the mettlesome steeds of his foe. So he whispered in his sleeve,—"There will be a booty for me."

When the fitting time of night arrived he repaired thither; he found the stalls occupied by thirty-three noble beasts, that had heretofore borne their masters in many a foray and many a border raid. Thirty of them he "tied with St.

Mary's knot,"—that is, he ham-strung them;—a cruel alternative certainly, but the one he was necessitated to resort to, in order that he might effectually prevent pursuit.

This done, he drew forth the new spurs and bridle from their concealments within the recesses of his unmentionables, and tethering two out of the three sound horses, he speedily rode off as invisibly as the north wind that hurries across the heath at night, and passed like a will-o'-the-wisp over the bogs of the Tarras. The single uninjured animal that he left behind, seems to have belonged to the Laird's Jock—that same "best fellow in all the company," who had interposed in his behalf on his arrival; and out of a grateful remembrance of this friendly act, he had consideration for his horse. There was honour amidst thieves in those days.

Now then did the modest goddess Aurora start up from the bed of Tethys, and blush rosy red as she raised her countenance above the eastern hills; and now did the thirty-three marchmen of Pudding-burn House start up from their beds also: but it is likely that they did not blush for shame when they raised their countenances and looked round upon each other.

A vehement burst of execration simultaneously emanated from every throat when the state of affairs in the stable became known; they roared

like the artillery of heaven, and they swore till the oak pannels of the hall cracked and split to pieces with the electrifying oaths; they threatened indiscriminate destruction to all whom it might concern, and they raved like men who were devising the quickest means of annihilating the whole earth, and all the planets that wait duteously upon the sun. The Laird's Jock declared that Dick was the offender; and, calling for his bay, he mounted to the pursuit, at the same time saying, that he would either fetch him back, or else slay him upon the moor. Expecting a stout resistance from the jester, he harnessed himself in a quilted jack or doublet, a steel cap, and a long two-handed sword.

By dint of rowel and switch, he succeeded in coming up with Dick on Connobie Lee, a rising ground on the outskirts of Liddesdale.

"Abide, abide, thou traitor thief!" cried he, both loud and hoarse; "turn and stand, for the day is come wherein thou must die."

But the fugitive looked back over his left shoulder without slacking his pace, and coolly inquired, "Whether he had any company besides himself."

Still coursing on, now nearly side by side, he again addressed his pursuer, not at all convinced of the justice of being called a traitor thief.

"There is a preacher in our chapel," continued

he, "that preaches both night and day to the sinners within the penfold of his cure; and there is ne'er a word that I mark, but especially three: "The first is Faith; the second Conscience; and the third, Never let a traitor escape. But Johnie Armstrong, what faith and conscience was thine, when thou didst foully steal my three kine? And then, forsooth, when thou hadst done me this wrong, thou wert not content till thou hadst made thy confrère pilfer the three coverlets from my wife's bed!"

Stung by this just reproach, and albeit inwardly guilty, yet not one whit penitent, he savagely raised his weapon, and aimed a deadly thrust at the speaker; but the powers above so directed his wicked hand, in such sort, that he only pierced a hole through Dickie's jerkin. A flying skirmish succeeded to this rough greeting, both parties striving hard for the mastery, whilst their horses still held on at full speed. The Englishman at last succeeded in hitting the Scot an ugly blow under one of the eyes, which felled him to the ground, stunned, but not killed.

"Gramercy!" cried the victor; "I had only two horses to carry home, but now of a truth I shall be able to take three!"

He disencumbered the conquered of his steel cap, doublet, and long sword, according to the usages of chivalry; observing to the prostrate

moss-trooper, that he would inform his master, Lord Scroop, that he had seen Johnie Armstrong during his visit into Scotland. And with that he departed into Cumberland.

When the other came to his senses and found himself alone and disarrayed of arms, his rage and his shame were neither of them small; he picked himself up as best he could, swearing that "he never would fight with a fool again."

Dick o' the Cow hastened to his lord, and shewed him the spoil; but the brow of the Warden darkened, and he declared that he would not dine until he had seen his vassal hung up by the neck; for he could not believe that so considerable a personage as Johnie Armstrong, from whom the jester had taken the horses, could have robbed Dick of his cows.

"Indeed I wot ye lie, my Lord, to say I have stolen from him that stole not from me;" a freedom of speech only warranted by the office of warden-court fool which he held.

After a fuller and more minute explanation of the circumstances of the exploit, the Lord Scroop became more convinced and pacified. "If," said he, "that be true what you tell me, (and I think you dare not tell a lie,) I will give you fifteen pounds for Jock's horse; and besides which, I will give you one of my best milch cows, to maintain your wife and three children; and I think

that will be an equivalent for any two that you have lost."

"Na," returned the other, shaking his head; "do you think to make a fool of me? I will either have twenty pounds in good lawful money, or I will take him to Morton fair, and stand the hazard of a chance sale."

And to this demand the nobleman was enforced to submit: so he handed over the twenty pounds and the cow.

Soon afterwards, as Dickie was riding through the streets of Carlisle, (on whose wall the sun shines bright,) he encountered the bailiff, Glozenburrie, the Warden's brother.

"Welcome my brother's fool!" quoth the latter. "Where didst thou get that bonny horse? Did he not belong to Johnie Armstrong? Where didst thou get him but steal him I trow? But hark'e, Sir Fool,—wilt thou sell him to me?"

"Ay," was the dry answer, "if thou wilt count me the money down in my lap; for I never will trust thee for a penny."

Thence ensued some chaffering about the price; the bailiff wanting to get the animal for ten pounds, but the jester, with terms little respectful, resolutely fixing it at double the sum, together with another cow. And in the end he triumphed, for the bailiff was compelled to submit to the same terms as the Lord Scroop had done before.

Dick was in high glee at this success, for it appears that he had still retained the best horse of the three for his own use. He hastened home to his wife and instantly gave her forty pounds for the three old coverlets: he gave her the two cows, observing that they were better worth than the three they had lost: and then he shewed her the brawny horse, assuring her that it was quite stout enough to carry them both.

Fearing, however, the vengeance of the Armstrongs, he shortly after removed his habitation to Burgh, under Stanemuir.

CHAPTER XV.

Feat of the Blind Harper of Lochmaben.

The Harper of Lochmaben town
Goes harping at Carlisle:
He steals the Warden's Wanton Brown
With cunning craft and guile.

The noble castle of Lochmaben is based on a peninsula, which projects into one of the four lakes that lie contiguous to each other in these parts. In former days it was the abode of Robert Bruce, when he was Lord of Annandale above Gretna. Four indifferent villages lie round about the fortress, called "The Four Towns of Lochmaben." The present inhabitants of these, are said to be the descendants of Bruce's feudal vassals and retainers, whom he located severally on small portions of land, in reward of their faithful services done for him in certain hazardous achievements.

Here, long ago, lived a harper, the last of his race, for harps in those parts were going out of fashion, to make way for that ever-out-of-time instrument the bag-pipe. And this harper was blind, and many called him silly; but that was a mistake—he was no fool.

The borderers on both sides of the Debateable Land having, from remote times, kept up a regular system of depredation and reprisal towards each other, held it a meritorious sort of thing if any one could succeed in injuring the enemy, either by the capture or destruction of any individual by stratagem or combat, or else by the theft and deportation of their cattle, or other moveable property.

These aggressions, practised on each other, too, were suddenly undertaken without any immediately preceding provocation. The other nation, no matter which, lying on the other side of the border, being considered hostile, as forsooth it generally was, lay open to attack at any moment whensoever it might be most convenient for the offensive party: and that offensive party might be Southrons, prowling northward with evil intent; or it might, on the other hand, be rough-footed Picts coming south with purposes equally bad.

The case of which we are about to speak was of the latter: but the blind harper went to practise cunning; and, eschewing all violence, to try and

pilfer his entertainers, who were listening enraptured to his dulcet tones. His plan was, to steal a certain steed belonging to the Lord Warden of the Western Marches, who, at that time, was dwelling in the Castle of Carlisle: and to this end he determined to follow the example of Alfred the Saxon, and Anlaff the Dane, who severally entered into the presence of those on whom they had evil designs, and by the sound of their music, turned their hosts' suspicions aside from the true motive of their visits.

Wherefore, the blind harper of Lochmaben, like a good husband as he was, first went to his wife, and in terms somewhat darksome, discoursed to her of the journey that he had in contemplation.

But the harper himself was duly seized of a gude gray mare, together with a foal—a circumstance of which his wife reminded him, at the same time adding, that if he purposed a journey to England, he had better mount on the said mare, but leave the foal at home with her.

The harper mounted his gude gray mare, and started for Carlisle city with every possible expedition: he went right through the parish of Gretna, and crossed the river Sark, near where it falls into the Firth, about the place where the stone bridge stands: he did not go much lower down, because the water is there too deep and not fordable. He then sped over Solway Moss; and having crossed

the Debateable Land, which, as we have before said, was not worth debating about, he came to the marshy mouths of the rivers Eden, Petteril, and Caude; these he waded through, and in time came in view of the castle.

He made right on for the drawbridge with all confidence; and to say the truth, he received that encouragement which was due to his estate, and for which he looked; harpers, minstrels, joculators, japers, or any of that tribe being ever right welcome in the halls of the ignorant nobles, who, unable to read or write, dearly loved pastime and good company.

On arriving at the gate, he met the Lord Warden himself, who incontinently cried, "Come into my hall thou silly blind harper, and let me hear of thy harping;" an invitation to which the new comer did not definitively reply, but expressed a wish that his mare might be led to some stable and cared for.

This was readily assented to; the baron looked over his left shoulder, and calling to his groom, charged him to perform this hostlike duty, and moreover, to tie the mare beside his "Wanton Brown,"—apparently the favourite horse of the stud.

This done, he repaired to the hall, wherein was assembled a right fair company of nobles, to whom he played and sang his best; and so delighted

were they at the pastime, that they all started from their seats and "footed the floor" with goodly gree.

The groom also, in his haste to enjoy the sport, quite forgot to secure the stable-door;—an omission that helped out the completion of the harper's design not a little.

Now when he had sung and played all the nobles to sleep, it should appear by the legend, that he himself, was still wide awake, albeit he could not see; for, notwithstanding that blind people do not see any more when they are awake than others do when they shut their eyes and doze, still they have, in common with those others both their waking moments and their sleeping moments. When they sleep, an it be that they do not shut out a view of the world around them, or do not darken their eyes by closing them, since they were dark before, they at all events "steep their senses in forgetfulness."

So, the blind harper, not having steeped his senses in anything of the sort, now prepared to compass the main object of his visit into English ground, even whilst the wits of his entertainers were macerating.

He put the shoes from off his feet, that the sound of his footsteps might not pierce the hollows of their ears, and then softly crept down stairs.

Just fancy him at midnight, groping along in

the dark, through the intricate passages of a baronical castle belonging to an enemy; but never mind fancies now, let us stick to the narrative and go on.

He stole forwards toward the stable with such "a step as would ne'er wear out the everlasting flint;" wary, light, deliberate; and when he felt that he had arrived at the door, he discovered to his satisfaction that indeed it was unbarred. How did this befall? Why, ye remember that the groom, in his desire to mingle in the pastime in the hall, and to listen to the Gleeman's jonglerie, quite forgot the door, and omitted to secure it.

It was but the work of a moment, therefore, to push it open, and to stalk in; and having done so, he discovered that the stable contained no less than thirty-three horses.

The next thing was, to discover his own gray mare amongst them all,—a matter which he probably achieved without much long or wearisome search, — at least, the ancient chroniclers of this exploit do not linger upon the recordation of any great delay, but rather seem to infer, that he proceeded with an astonishing success.

He found her beside the Wanton Brown, even as the Lord Warden had directed, even beside the very steed against which his purposes were levelled.

His next operation was to take a colt halter from his hose—for it should appear that he had not quitted the republic of Lochmaben unprepared; and this he deftly slipped over the Wanton's nose, at the same time tying the other end of the said halter securely to the tail of his own mare. Thus, they were united head to stern, like one vessel to another, that is towed behind on the water.

He led them from the stable to the castle-gate, and here he set them both loose, leaving it to the well known discretion or wisdom of his old gray, as to how they should find their way home.

Of a truth, the ballad assures us that the mare started off with the swiftness of an arrow from a Saxon bow, right away north over the flats of the Eden, over the Picts' wall, over the Debateable Land, through Gretna Green, with the rapidity of modern post horses that are yoked to such vehicles as carry run-away lovers, all over moor, over moss, still dragging behind her the Lord Warden's most especial favourite, the Wanton Brown. To have seen this, it would have been "good for sore eyes,"—any eyes but the harper's.

She gave no rest to the war-horse behind her; she stopped not, she slackened not, she tarried not by the way; but *on*, *on*, *on*, was her cry, even with the swiftness of the flying breezes.

She knew her course, and she kept it, albeit the night was dark and the region savage; and she arrived at the gate of Lochmaben a full three hours before daylight had begun to glare about over the land.

When she got to the harper's door, she neighed and snorted right lustily; so that the good wife withinside, incontinently starting up out of her dreams, began to cry out with a voice passing loud to the serf-maiden that dozed near at hand.

"Rise up, thou lazy lass," quoth she; "and let in thy master and his mare."

At this the damsel bounced out of her comfortable couch, thinking, with her mistress, that the harper had surely arrived. But being either of a timid temperament, or of a careful nature, or being awake to the danger and rudeness of the times in which it had pleased heaven she should be born, she did not rashly throw open the door, but shrewdly looked through the key-hole to discover who was without. And much indeed did she marvel at what she saw, as her exclamation, which has been duly noted down by historiographers, fully proves.

"Oh, by my sooth!" cried she, in wonderment; "our mare has gotten a braw brown foal!"

"Hold your tongue, you silly wench," was the

gude wife's prompt reply; "the morning is but glancing in your eye."

"I 'll bet my whole wages to a groat," returned the girl, "but he is bigger than ever our foal will be."

Leaving these two gossips to clear up this mystery as best they may, let us return back again over the Border to Carlisle, and see how speeds the harper in the castle.

He had sung and played the lordlings to sleep before he stole down stairs to the stable, as we have already advertised ye; and it appears that he returned back into the midst of them, after having performed his chevisance, without so much as ever having been missed.

On arousing themselves from their slumbers, and still finding him there, they once more cried out for music: nothing could they do but listen to him; and he played on through the night, aye, even until the day-dawn began to light up the eastern hills.

Daylight often makes strange discoveries to many of us. In this instance, when the sun had mounted up into the blue heavens, and when the inmates of the fortress had set themselves about their various morning occupations, and when the groom, amongst others, had gone to the stable to look after his horses, he there made a discovery that the favourite barb, the most especial Wanton

Brown, pertaining to the most puissant baron, the Lord Warden of the Western Marches, was missing, was gone, actually gone! Here was matter of marvel—here was food for speculation!

This, howbeit, only concerned the Lord Warden. They found that the blind harper's gray mare was missing also. On the announcement of this disclosure, the said harper gave vent to a most boisterous fit of lamentation. He wept the hour that ever he had left his home to come there; he bewailed certain losses that he had previously sustained, especially the loss of a colt a short space before: and by way of crowning his calamities and succumbing him to the very dust, he now declared that in England they had stolen his gude gray mare.

It is a curious trait in human nature, that when a person has sustained any great calamity, he is not content to bewail that calamity singly, but turns to, and must needs recapitulate a host of others that have previously happened.

If a man by any misfare, chances to lose a thousand pounds to-day, he does not simply speak of this bad hap, but he taxes his speech to assure his friends that he lost so much money last year, or peradventure that he was cheated of twice as much the year before.

In the same way, the harper not only declares his present bereavement, but likewise proclaims in

loud accents that he had lost a colt foal in Scotland not long in aforetime.

Perhaps the recapitulation of so many disasters may serve to augment the magnitude of the last; for it is certain, that although a man may endure to lose a thousand pounds to-day, still, if he had been losing a thousand pounds every year ever since he was born, he might find that the last loss would bring even a rich man low, and be a final clencher.

The harper, however, received both pity and consolation. They laughed at him for his bewailments it is true; but they told him to cease repining; that they desired more of his harmony; and that if he would again play to them, they would both indemnify him for his colt, and give him a far better mare than he had ever possessed before.

Truly he brightened up at this: he sang his best lays and romances, and he drew from his harp-strings a burst of sweeter sounds than ever.

Light is the heart whose desires are gratified: quick is the step that moves on a willing errand: and sweet is the labour that is done for those we love. Sweet also is labour, that is done for good pay; and it was the anticipation of an ample, though unmerited reward, that brought this last strain so readily from the wily Scot.

With shame be it recorded, he had never lost the colt at all; only, it should seem, that by men-

tioning a former calamity, he wished to excite a greater degree of commiseration for the subsequent one.

They paid him for this colt of which he had never been bereaved; and they gave him three times the value of his mare, which was now comfortably at home along with the Lord Warden's Wanton Brown.

Having settled his affairs in this way, it is possible that he was not long in wending back again over the border, through Gretna and home.

And so much for the Blind Harper of Lochmaben.

CHAPTER XVI.

The Raid of Solway Moss.

Hear may ye read full plain and clear,
Without excuse or gloss,
About the battle called whylere,
"The Raid of Solway Moss."

James V., as we have shewn, though ready for war when it should be meet, was also ever ready for love, when the time should serve: he suffered great persecution from the Douglasses for a long time, but triumphed over them in the end; the civil wars, which this family had not a little fomented, had reduced the state to a pitiful condition of anarchy: but when the king succeeded in putting these enemies down, he turned seriously towards a thorough amelioration of his government. He was far from being deficient in parts; but discovered courage, acuteness, presence of mind, and a good ability to fulfil his high and responsible station; yet, at the same time, it must be

conceded, that his passions often drove him to commit vast acts of cruelty.

A great part of his reign was troubled with the unchristian disputes in religion—an unmeet subject to breed animosity. Romanism was, perhaps, as tyrannical, bigoted, and intolerant in Scotland as in any country beneath the offended heavens. The king himself favoured the established church of papacy: not so much because in his conscience he believed it to be the purer, but because the Archbishop of St. Andrews, the Pope's representative in his dominions, had formerly rescued him out of the clutches of his foes; and the gratitude, which this act had created towards the individual, became love to the individual; and the love to the individual, by a natural extension, attached itself to the religion, in his dominions, at the head of which the individual stood.

Time and experience have proved, that persecution rather spreads and propagates a new opinion than destroys it: *it creates a curiosity to know what the new opinion can be* that is so treated,—and this very curiosity favours its growth. Nothing tended to blazon all over Scotland this curiosity to know what Lutherism was, so much as the burning of Patric Hamilton, Abbot of Ferne, the first particularly noticeable heretic: and, so far from this rigour effecting the purposed end, it rather

served to publish those very opinions which his executioners were trying to stifle.

These ungentle thoughts were turned aside in the year 1537, by the marriage of the king with the daughter of Francis of France, and a happier train called up:—but his bride died a few months after.

The next year James consoled his widowhood by espousing Mary of Guise: and, by so doing, greatly offended Henry VIII. of England, who was also a candidate for that lady's hand. Soon after this, certain other matters befel between the two other monarchs, which it was found impossible to accommodate, wherefore they both prepared to decide their differences by the *ultima ratio regum*, namely, war:—*Regibus hic mos est.*

Henry attacked and captured twenty Scotch trading vessels on the high seas, and then threatened to revive the ancient feudal right to the sovereignty of this part of the island, so strongly asserted by Edward I.: he complained that James had usurped his title of Defender of the Faith, to which he had added the word Christian, implying that Henry must be an infidel; but the Pope had, some time before, complimented the Scotch kings with that title. Henry had declared himself sole monarch of Ireland at this juncture, but James strenuously asserted that he had at least a right to one half of it, for all the northern parts

were peopled by his subjects or their offspring, and many of the Irish chieftains had actually come over and sworn fealty to him; and such being the posture of affairs, and the spirit of the two kings, nothing was left but to fight.

The kingdom of Scotland was now, owing to divers wise statutes and regulations which the parliament had enacted, in a happier, more formidable, more enlarged, and more efficient condition, than it had ever before been: its armies were numerous, its militia well regulated, and its revenues abundant; so that victory and success were looked for with confidence.

Several hostile encounters took place on the borders and the Merse, in most of which the English were either defeated or obliged to retreat; and albeit some signs of disaffection had manifested themselves in James's soldiers, whereby they could not be induced at all times to draw their swords against the English or enter their country; yet, at last, they consented to invade England by the western marches over the Sark and the Solway Moss.

Ten thousand men were demanded for this purpose; James sent them forward, purposing himself soon to follow. Great discontent existed amongst the soldiers; for, owing to the king's adherence to the Romish creed, which had by this time become unpopular throughout the king-

dom, and owing to divers unwise acts which he had done in the cabinet, whereby he had so entirely estranged the affections of his nobles as to have lost all confidence in their fidelity, he found that it was not without many signs of mutiny that they could be brought to consent to invading England at his commandment.

Disgusted at the turbulent spirit which still continued to dislocate the unanimity of his army, he sent a message when it had approached the Debateable Land, depriving the Lord Maxwell of his commission, and conferring the command on Oliver Sinclair, a private gentleman, who was his minion.

However bad matters might have been before this transaction, of a truth, it must be said, that they were ten times worse afterwards.

On the 23rd of November, 1542, the Scotch began their march at midnight; and, having passed the Sark and the Esk, all the circumjacent villages were seen in flames by the break of day. Sir Thomas Wharton, the English warden of those marches, hastily raised a few troops, in all not exceeding five hundred men, and drew them up on an advantageous ground.

Now then did Oliver Sinclair arise in his true puissance: he ordered the royal banner to be unfurled over his head, by way of calling respect and attention to his estate, and then mounting

aloft on the shoulders of two tall men, so as to be seen of all eyes, he read aloud his commission.

Presumptuous is the pen that tries to describe the scene that hereupon ensued; wonderment, rage, and consternation, all burst forth like so many contending whirlwinds: the military beauties of rank and file were immediately obliterated from the host: and the commanders first, and then the soldiers, every one declared, without a dissentaneous voice, that they would liefer all surrender themselves prisoners to their foes, than submit to the commandment of such a general as Sinclair.

Everything in an instant was dissorder, tumult, and confusion: horse and foot, bowmen and halberdiers, hand-gunners and hagbut-men, noblemen and camp scullions, regulars, stragglers, hangers-on and country peasants, all formed one motley and heterogeneous comminglement.

Some philanthropists affirm that, in the ordinary dealings of life with our fellow men, it is ignoble for one to take an undue advantage of another; but in war, which at best is but a satanic game, this amiable principle is not always respected. Certain it is, the English made no hesitation at taking the Scots at a disadvantage on this occasion. They perceived the disordered state of the ten-thousand, and not impossibly divined its cause, since their emissaries had advertised them fully of all circumstances touching King James's impolicy;

and a hundred light-horse had already advanced to the charge. These met with but very little resistance, and had scarce any work to try the strength of their arms. The rest of the English now advanced: the confused Scotch, being in no fensible condition, and in no good mind to defend themselves, hastily eschewed the presence of their guests by having regard to what in more modern ages has been designated "leg bail:" and, if it really be, that the term itself did not then exist on men's tongues, this true record at least instructs us, that the practice in men's legs certainly did.

To the deep thinker, and to the natural philosopher, these facts and haps are not without instruction; for they will induce us into the knowledge of certain remarkable circumstances in the physiology of the human species, amongst the chief of which is this, videlicet,—that valour dwells above the waist-band girded round the body, but that fear has its habitation below. For, whereas he who is possessed of goodly courage, a stout heart, and plenty of that same courage, sticks well to it when he meets his foe, stands upon his legs, and keeps them still, throwing all his strength vigorously into his arms with which he valiantly defends himself: but, on the other hand, he who is stricken with terror when he meets his foe, immediately drops his arms as of no use, and, speedily putting all his vigour into his legs below his girdle, turns about and runs for it.

Such was the vigour of the Scots below their waist-bands, that they fled away over the Debateable Land and Gratney like the wind, even trampling each other under foot in their expedition; and such was their perplexity, derangement, and panic, that they drew their claymores from their sides, friends madly piercing friends, and countrymen unwittingly slaying countrymen with their own hands. Their fear was so excessive, and so helpless had they become through its mastery, that the very women and boys of the English camp came up and made prisoners of the soldiers without difficulty.

Such was the Raid of Solway Moss.

When the consummation of this untoward affair was reported to James, he fell into a grievous state of distraction; rage against his commanders, who he thought had betrayed him; some severe stings of his own conscience, which arose upon him at the remembrance of many of his past follies; divers *curæ edaces*, which had long been eating into his constitution; and, finally, this shameful defeat, all together brought such an accumulation of woes upon his head at one fell swoop, that, being unable to endure them any longer, he died on the 14th of December, 1542.

He left his infant daughter Mary, then only a week old, and afterwards Queen Elizabeth's victim at Fotheringay, sole heiress to his dominions: and under these circumstances, Henry VIII. strove to

unite both kingdoms together, by proposing a union between her and his son Edward, now five years of age. Albeit, from prudential motives, the Scotch acceded to this proposition, yet, shortly afterwards fresh disputes arose which prevented its ultimate accomplishment; for "the Yrische lordes of Scotland, commonly callit the Redd-shanckes, and by historiographouris, Pictis," would not listen to anything of the sort, when they found themselves strong enough to resist it.

About this time there was one John Elder, whom we have above quoted, somewhat of a scholar and much of a schemer, who busied himself and his pen by writing to Henry, cunningly setting forth and devising certain plans for effecting the wished-for union; and to the influence of his arguments thus conveyed to the king, are ascribed those secret cabals, those deviseful measures, the existence of many unknown emissaries, who prowled over many parts of Scotland, and insinuated their way into the society of both nobles and gentles, those political plots, those reiterated negotiations, and those off-and-on stipulations, which annoyed the regency in Scotland for a series of years afterwards.*

They ended in nothing, and Mary became sole Queen

* See this curious letter in vol. i. of the Transactions of the Iona Club.

CHAPTER XVII

Sketch of the History of Mary Queen of Scots.

The loves and troubles of Queen Mary,
Revealed for him that reads:
And whether she was over chary
In all her acts and deeds.

With much truth has it been said, that no man ever read the life of Mary Queen of Scotland, without letting his pity for this most unfortunate of women overcome every other passion within his bosom.

Whether the queen was really an object of virtue and innocence, let others decide as they think or feel: certain it is, so great is our interest in her, so great do we confess her misfortunes to have been, whether of her own making or not, and so unnecessarily severe do we declare her enemies to have been against her, that we are disposed to make every excuse, to catch at the smallest point

to explain away the accusation, and willingly proffer our full pardon, although it may be that our consciences tell us that such pardon may not be rigid justice.

The condition of the nation in her time was that of anarchy, and distraction, and cabal: the nobles were looking after their own interests rather than after those of the state; the clash of the too religions, struggling for supremacy, was breeding rancour between man and man; and the machinations of France and England, jealous of each other's influence in Scotland, kept all three countries not only internally divided amongst themselves, but also at enmity against each other.

Several successive kings of this northern kingdom met with violent deaths; some through unforeseen accident, some through irresistible misfortune, and some through premeditated assassination. This necessity, long continued,—for a regency had rendered the nobles powerful, turbulent, insolent, and ambitious;—had disrupted all order, had weakened all respect for law, and had done much towards creating the bands of Catereens, banditti, and moss-troopers, that at this period harassed the whole land, but especially the borders.

Mary Stuart, sometime queen of the Scots, was thrice married, as has been duly set forth in the pages of other histories besides this now in the hands of the companionable reader; neither time

actually married at Gretna Green, but twice within the confines of that kingdom of which that remarkable parish forms a part—an important part too—thus connecting her with the matter in discussion, but especially by the progresses she made into this district, and so, walking as it were, directly into our book.

Much of her youth was spent in France, and by her union with Francis II. she shared with him the throne of that country. Educated at the court of her father-in-law Henry II., the natural capacities of her mind were drawn out under every care and advantage, such as the age in which she lived, together with her position and rank, powerfully afforded; she was instructed in the Latin tongue as was then the custom amongst personages of elevated station; French, Spanish, and Italian, she spoke with fluency, grace, and precision: she wrought tapestry, or deftly employed her needle at white-seam and shell-work: poetry was her delight;—"Elle composait de vers," says Brantome, "dont j'en ay veu aucun de beaux et très bien faits:" with a good eye for colour, she could paint with truth; her skill in music, as displayed on the virginal, was the jealousy, envy, and vexation of her rival, Elizabeth of England: and furthermore, says one of her biographers, "she walked, danced, and rode with enchanting gracefulness." Where, we would inquire, was ever the

man that could forbear falling in love, that saw this princess?

The history of her loves is the history of misadventure: and yet, so fair, so enticing, so sweet are the first approaches toward the rough course of this passion, that few enter the portal, that do not fight on madly to the end.

> "Alas, that love, so gentle in his view,
> Should be so tyrannous and rough in proof."

> "Libertas, career, pax, pugna, dolenda voluptas:
> Spes-metuens, mel-fel, seria, ludus, Amor."

Thus wrote Joannes Owenus, Cambro-Britannus; and the old nursery verse runs to the same effect,—

> "Res est soliciti, plena timoris, Amor."

If love be a thing full of solicitude and fear, accompanied by crosses, hopes deferred, disappointments, and the like—all of them emotions most desirable to be eschewed,—surely, it cannot be well-advised in any to harbour so much misery in his bosom? Perchance this is true: but the sweetness of the beginning no one can well forego, though his judgment assure him that the end will be bitter. It is a sweet bait that entices the fish to gorge his own destruction.

> "Principium dulce est, at finis amoris amarus:
> Læta venire Venus, tristis abire solet."

At the death of her husband Francis, Mary was sorely grieved; in so much that she took pen and ink, and then poured forth her afflictions upon paper, — for poetry is the safety-valve to every confined passion at high pressure.

Some short time afterwards she returned to her own kingdom; not, howbeit, without much regret at leaving the country wherein she was brought up, and over which she had reigned Queen. There is a song by Beranger, purposed to express her feelings, as she withdrew from the coast of Normandy; but the French have preserved some lines composed by herself on that occasion—as see here:—

"Adieu! plaisant pays de France,
O ma patrie,
La plus chérie,
Qui a nourri ma jeune enfance:
Adieu France; adieu mes beaux jours,
La nef que disjoint nos amours,
N'a eu de moi que la moitié.
Une part te reste; elle est tienne:
Je la fie à ton amitié,
Pour que de l'autre il te souvienne."

For three years she governed Scotland prosperously, when it became necessary, for the peace and stability of her kingdom, that she should wed once again. Divers foreign powers had offered alliances, but these it was her policy to decline, seeing that she was heir to the crown of England, and did

not wish to bring strangers into the land. She had previously, through the evil counsel of others, imprudently quartered the arms of England along with her own bearing on the Scottish shield, thereby not a little offending the imperious Elizabeth; as much as to say, "Look, Elizabeth; see how pleasantly I am reckoning upon the possession of your patrimony, even before you have been lamentably gathered unto your fathers."

Owing to the conflicting and contradictory testimony of her various historiographers, it is hard to say whether she afterwards married Darnley through choice, policy, or compulsion; yet, if there be truth in the passage here following, said to have been written by her own hand, surely the fire of love had never enkindled up her affections towards him.

"Lord Darnley is perpetually with me," she says in her letter, "and pretends to testify his passion by his jealousy; and backed by that assuming arbitress of my fate, the English Queen, [for it should seem that Darnley was one of the lovers that Elizabeth had suggested as desirable for Mary,] already takes upon him the authority of a husband."

It is not our province here to discuss the authenticity of the series of love letters written to the Earl of Bothwell by the Queen, from one of which the above is taken. They have been accepted

as genuiue by many of the erudite; and were discovered in "ane small gylt coffer, not fully ane fute lang," and "garnischit in sindrie places with the romaine letter F., under ane Kingis crowne," the F. being the initial letter of Francis.

In another letter, found in the same casket, written in 1564, we are told of another proposition of Elizabeth's, as see:—"I am for ever doomed to be the vassal of the English Queen, the tool of her cursed policy, the property of her ambition, without a friend to aid me. She writes me now, that the reasons for breaking off the match with Darnley were, because she thinks Leicester more worthy of my bed and crown!"

Whenever her pen traced words for Bothwell, its point had been dipped in the honey of a passionate love. These letters betray that she desired and languished for him even before she had wedded her second husband; and that, to her second husband she never bore aught but repugnance, albeit some have said otherwise. Wherefore, there existed some cogent reason why she forewent the man of her election, and espoused another. "France, Spain, England, and Rome," she says, "were providing me husbands; Murray was depriving me of everything but the name of Queen! How, but by marriage, could I put a stop to the solicitations of the one side, or have curbed the insolence of the other? Well you

know that it was not in my power to make choice of you, without I could have been content not onely to see my crown torn from me, but also resign both our lives to glut the implacable malice of our foes." After her unfortunate marriage, she says thus of her husband,—"I never loved this Darnley [*this!*], and his ingratitude has made me hate him." And elsewhere, excusing herself for not having wedded as her heart could have desired:—"I believe you are now perfectly convinced that there was an absolute necessity for my marriage, though the regret with which you behold me in another's arms, will not permit you to acknowledge it." She then concludes:—"Adieu, my dear Bothwell. I have time to add no more than that I am, and ever shall be,

"Yours, M. R."

According to her own words, in another letter, her choice of Darnley, who was the next heir to the Scottish succession, and who would have been declared king to her exclusion, had her father introduced the Salique Law as he had contemplated, was of a nature political and prudent solely. "What induced me to make choice of him," she says, "rather than any other, was because I would avoid giving any umbrage to the contending Princes, whose equal pretensions might have expected equal favours: but in this marriage, which, in the world's eye will seem wholly

induced by inclination, neither Rome, nor France, nor Spain, can be disobliged; nor can Elizabeth, with any show of justice, blame me; because it was on her recommendation that I first listened to his suit; and in preferring him to Leicester, I cannot but have the approbation of the whole judging world. Think not that it was love that furnished me with arguments to justify my choice; for I protest by the same dread power by which I have so often swore, that Bothwell was the dearest thing on earth, that he is so, and ever will be so while I have life."

The personal appearance of Henry Stuart Lord Darnley was comely and prepossessing: he was tall, well made, and handsome; but the bounty of nature did not extend to his mind, since his understanding was narrow, his obstinacy pertinacious, his ambition excessive, though not directed by any good principle, and he was whimsical, passionate, and capricious.

The ill-fated pair were united on the 29th of July, 1565, and continued so until February 10th, 1567. Some of her biographers declare, that "the Queen gave her husband every possible evidence of the most extravagant love;" but that it was not in humanity to cherish this love long towards one who, by his inordinate and base ambition, soon entered into a conspiracy to dethrone his wife, and seat himself in her place. Puffed up

"with pride and preposterous vanity, unreasonable in his desires, fickle in his choice of favourites, and unstable in his friendships, he lost the confidence of all ranks; he became little in the eyes of the people, and despised in the estimation of the nobles. Yet Mary, we are told, continued to love beyond expectation, and to endure above belief.

But one night Darnley was blown up into the air: yea, after the fashion of a sky-rocket, he ascended through the roof of his house, up towards the firmament; his body described a parabola, and then lighted heavily in a neighbouring field. It was in February—a cold night: but he lay there reposedly with nothing on but a light garment.

Who shall now discover the perpetrators of so foul a crime? Conjecture is nothing—suspicion is no argument—supposition is no evidence—belief is no proof. Draw the curtain and hold your tongue.

Some threw aspersion at James Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell, but he was afterwards declared innocent; and many of the nobles of the realm drew up and signed a paper wherein they indeed proposed and recommended him as a fitting husband for the Queen, so soon as her twice widowed tears should be assuaged. If it be that the love letters of the gilt casket may truly be accepted for belief, these tears might soon dry away like a passing shower, leaving the sun of love to burst forth afterwards, and shine brightly upon Bothwell.

But Bothwell had a wife—ay, verily, Bothwell was bound up in the knots of matrimony. The only thing left was divorce. "As for the divorce you write me concerning, I would not have you think of it as yet. The times are at present too much unsettled, and your wife has powerful friends." It was early in their correspondence that she wrote to him in this strain; for the dissuasion here insisted on, was not subsequently adhered to, as the process was drawn up, and Bothwell was set free.

It was a curious matter this divorcement—or rather, these divorcements, for there were two; each one severally made out against the other; his wife, the Lady Jane Gordon, preferring one against him, and he, on his part, preferring one against her. Her bill was founded on the charge of his treason, want of allegiance, and disregard of the oaths that he had sworn to her before the altar; his, that she was his cousin, allied to him too nearly by blood, and within the prohibited degrees, as sanctioned by the Church of Rome: wherefore his tender conscience was but ill at ease under a connexion so illicit. Her suit was brought against him in the Court of Commissaries; his against her before the Court of the Archbishop of St. Andrews; and in both their union was declared void—thus it is, they were mutually and doubly divorced.

"The divorce," observes Buchanan, "was posted forward without any slackness either in the witnesses or in the judges. Within the space of ten days the matter was taken in hand, began and intended, joyned unto, tryed, and judged, before both the companies of judges."

At this time the Earl of Bothwell was Warden of the whole Marches; a dignity that ofttimes imposed upon him certain warlike expeditions on the borders, as the hunting down of outlaws, the apprehending of thieves, or the chastisement of rebels.

The earl's divorce was not merely *à mensâ et thoro*, because that would not have answered his purpose, but altogether *à vinculo matrimonii*, whereby he was free to take the rash steps which verily he afterwards did take. Many there were of that day who cried out loud against these matters, as not conscientiously satisfied with that which the law permitted; some objecting to the separation because it had not been brought about through the suggestions of any really good motive, and others spurned at the practice of divorce altogether.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Loves of Mary and Bothwell.

Some more about the Queen is said,
And how the Earl got wounded:
How she towards him to see him fled—
The which she very soon did.

Looking at matters in this position, wherein we find her a widow and him a bachelor—or in a state equivalent—it will be no disparagement to either if they be suffered to love. That she really loved Bothwell, her historiographers allow; and this, her letters, if genuine, manifestly prove. "No time is pleasing to me," she writes to him, "that is not spent in giving you new demonstrations of my affections: well may I err in the rules of goverment and state, when all my thoughts are taken up with love." Furthermore, this ardent liking was not a concealed flame visible only to themselves, but was well wot of by most persons who lived in those times, being witnesses and

gossippers of the little dalliances betwixt them. "If it were put to her choice," says Sir N. Throgmorton, "to relinquish her crown and kingdom, or the Lord Bothwell, she would leave her kingdom and dignity to go a simple damsel with him."

Some time previously to this, Bothwell received certain hurts in a skirmish on the western borders near Gretna; and during the period of his convalescence, the Queen came over from Jedburgh to inquire into his estate, and to condole with him about the mishap. It happened in the valley of Liddesdale, and he was borne away bleeding to Hermitage Castle by his companions and vassals. The face of the country lying round about the Debateable Land was wild, barren, and in many spots marshy,—indeed, even in the present day it is little otherwise where this affray took place; all over Solway Moss, stretching from the Sark nearly to the wall of Severus; and in other districts bounding the Firth. The valley of Annandale presented the same features on the flat banks of its rivers, especially near their mouths; but the uplands and hills, though not cultivated as now, were dry, woody, and capable of being fertilized. The traces of a Roman military road are visible through the country; and the camps of Birrins in Middlebie, and on Burnswark hill, are entire. The castles of Comlongan and Auch-

incass once pertained to the Murrays, lords of Annandale: the latter, now gone to decay, was the seat of the potent Thomas Randolph, regent of Scotland in the minority of David II.: its ruins cover above an acre of ground, and prove its former extent, strength, and magnificence. The stronghold of Lochmaben, near the town of Annan, was built by the Bruces, after they became barons of this region: it was considered the key of the Western Marches, and consequently oft-times the scene of warfare. Upon the death of David II. it came into the power and possession of the same Thomas Randolph, together with many other fortilices here about: then to the Dunbars, earls of March; then to the Douglasses; then to Alexander Duke of Albany; and, lastly, to the crown. As this stewartry of Annandale was the great thoroughfare into this part of Scotland, and as therefore it was continually, in a bárbarous age, the field of strife, it had never for centuries had the coulter of civilization run through it, seeing that it were foolish for Scotchmen to sow corn, when, peradventure, Englishmen might reap it with the sword blade next summer. Wherefore we are told that it continued a wild heath or uncultivated common until the beginning of the present century, when divers new roads were laid down and the country enclosed. By this modern practice of enclosing, it

is astonishing how may fine and convenient battle-grounds have been destroyed: surely the English never mean to fight again, if we may judge by what they are continually doing; for he who destroys a place whereon to fight, has a peaceful disposition, in the same way that he who turns his sword into a domestic carving knife, never means to draw it again against an enemy. There are few open spaces now left in the kingdom whereon ten thousand men could quarrel conveniently,—especially if one half of them wished to run away without the hinderance of climbing hastily over hedges.

A "Border raid" during the golden age of "the good old times" was the almost daily amusement of a certain set of thieves, banditti, and outlaws that lurked in the fens of the Debateable Land; in practising the which, they plundered and slew at pleasure all whomsoever it might concern. My Lord Bothwell,—or, craving his forgiveness, the Duke of Orkney, for unto such rank he had now attained through courtly favour,—James Hepburn Duke of Orkney, was warden of the whole Marches on the Scottish frontier, an honour that called him constantly into service, together with a numerous train of armed followers, who from time to time scoured the country, and hunted out the evil subjects that lay hid in the fastnesses of the Cheviots. One day he buckled

on his armour and mounted his charger, and issued forth with halberdiers, hand-gunners, and bowmen, coursing through Liddesdale above Gretna. Here they came upon divers outlaws and the like, who opposed them sword for sword, and lance for lance, standing to it stoutly, and fighting with valour. But the Lord Warden was no recreant: he feared not the face of a foe, nor the glitter of naked steel: fierce looks daunted not his heart, nor did the slogan terrify his ear. He couched lance and charged like a hurricane; and death indeed followed his course: he charged again upon one of the stalwart who seemed fashioned of steel and born from a mother of brass—one whom strokes could not subdue nor weapons pierce. The duke grappled with this stranger, and the two combatants strove in each other's arms for the mastery: the duke essayed to bring him down, but the other debated hard, as one unwilling to succumb: and as they were bound in each other's grasp with the thongs of their muscular limbs, the duke received a piteous wound from a blade that his foe now drew in his stress. This was not all:—the mosstrooper thrust at him again and again; so that the duke was sore pressed and bewildered, till such time as the blood gushed from his sides, and his followers came to the rescue.

There are few things more sickening to the hot impetuosity of headlong courage in a warrior, than

the fact of feeling a long piece of cold steel rapidly slipping between his ribs, and rudely accosting the viscera that repose withinside. Independently of its calling up grim pictures of probable death before his eyes, and hereby making him reflect in such a manner as he never did before, it likewise goes far to wither up the pride of his great manhood, by the bodily anguish that it sends through his members:—and there is no argument, whether wrought by philosopher or stoic, that could ever persuade away the smartings of bodily anguish. "La douleur du corps," nous dit Mons. le Duc de la Rochefoucauld, "est le seul mal de la vie, que la raison ne peut guérir, ni affoiblir."

Bothwell was borne away to his castle of Hermitage, where he lay in some danger; and the Queen, having been advertised of this misadventure, brought about through dutiful service, came over in some haste to ascertain the extent of his hurt.

In her famous sonnet, which she writ to her lover some space after this mishap, a copy of which has been preserved to posterity, she thuswise alludes to it:—

> "Puis me donna un autre dur alarme,
> Quand il versa de sang mainte dragme;
> Dont de grief me vint laisser douleur,
> Qui m'en pensa oster la vie, et frayeur
> De perdre las! le seul rampart qui m'arme."

Buchanan, the chronicler of notable events that befel in these times, and a contemporary of Mary, was nevertheless her majesty's enemy: he may have told great truth in his writings, but that truth he most assuredly set forth in uncivil words. His narrative of this affair runs thus:

"Within few days after, when the Queen determined to go to Jedworth," says he, "to the assizes to be there holden, about the beginning of October, Bothwell maketh his journey into Liddesdale. There, behaving himself neither according to the place whereto he was called, nor according to his nobility of race or estimation, he was wounded by a poor thief, that was himself ready to die, and carried into the castle called the Hermitage, with great uncertainty of his recovery. When news hereof was brought to Brothwick to the Queen, she flingeth away in haste like a mad woman, by great journeys in post, in the sharp time of winter, first to Melrose, and then to Jedworth. There, though she heard sure news of his life, yet her affection, impatient of delay, could not temper itself, but needs she must bewray her outrageous lust, and in an inconvenient time of year, despising all discommodities of the way and weather, and all dangers of thieves, she betook herself headlong to her journey, with such a company as no man of any honest degree would have adventured his life and his goods among them.

Thence she returned again to Jedworth, and with most earnest care and diligence, provideth and prepareth all things to remove Bothwell thither."

Her Majesty was no hypocrite towards her lover; but whatsoever she felt, that she broached liberally without reserve; if she were warm, she told him so; if she were anxious for his society, she bid him come: if he had offended her, she said so: and as she passionately loved him, so she wrote.

"Alace!" she writes in one of her letters, "I nevir dissavit any body: but I remit me altogidder to your will. Send me advertisement quhat I sall do, and quhatsaever thing come therof, I sall obey yow."

Toward the end of this epistle she excuses the haste and unmeritableness with which it had been done:—"Excuse my evil writing," are her words, "and read it twice over. Excuse the thing that is scribbled, for I had no paper yesterday when I writ that of the memorial. Remember your love, (that is, herself,) and write unto her, and that very oft. Love me as I shall do you."

There is no dissemblance here; and some of her historians have thought that she was not quite so coyly and reservedly spoken, as might beseem her estate. But ladies in those days had wider latitude of tongue than now—the times were not so highly polished—society was less artificial—man-

ners were more marked for their simplicity and nature—so that what the bosom conceived the lips might freely express. Hugh Campbell, a publisher of some of Mary's Letters, and one of the controversialists as to their authenticity, not only excuses the Queen's freedom of speech, but also gives to every lady greater latitude in matters of love than in any other matters whatsoever.

"Women in love," says he, "are not always limited by the cold and frigid rules which custom on other occasions has imposed on their sex. Hence I think it within the pale of reason that these letters and sonnets should not be considered spurious, on the ground that they are not so elegant and delicate as might be expected from a young lady of rank in our days."

But let us hasten to the event; we have seen that Mary was now a widow, and Bothwell enfranchised by a twofold process of divorcement—a process that was achieved in May 1567. For several years past, she had been sorely troubled in church, state, and matrimony: cabals, leagues, plots, and seditious outbreaks had all in turn conspired against her peace, or violated her repose, or excited her apprehension; but now the wheel of a better fortune had revolved sunshine upon her afflictions, and dried up the damps of her oppression. Her exultation hereat is manifestly portrayed in the passages here sequent, to wit,—

"Fortune," she cries, "grown weary of persecuting me, at length grows as extravagant in her blessings as she was in the former part of my life in her cruelty: and your divorce being looked upon as good as completed [in reality it was completed at the time, but the Queen did not know it], Murray himself proposed you to me as an husband—nay seemed eager in his pressures that I would give him my promise that you should become so immediately you were in condition.

"Scarce could I contain the joy of my exulting soul,—scarce keep my tongue from letting him know how much my heart took part in his persuasions. * * * *

"Though I know you are to be in Edinburgh in so short a time, I could not delay making you the partaker of those transports you are the author of. There is a delicacy in such love as mine, which will not suffer me to be blessed alone; and when I think this happy news has reached you, I shall indulge myself in sympathy with those ecstacies which I flatter myself you will feel at the receipt of so unexpected an information. Make all the convenient speed you can to town; I now long with double impatience for your presence: it is not Bothwell, a man whose freedom with me love alone could authorize, but my intended husband and future king, that I shall now embrace.

"Haste then to the arms, though ever present to the heart of M. R."

There is no mistake (as modern historiographers phrase it) about the sentiments set forth in the above. Bothwell, thus advertised, made all due haste to hie away to Edinburgh: but three days only ere he did so, her Majesty's impatience again writ loving protestations unto him.

"Oh, my Bothwell!" she exclaims toward the end of one of her epistles, "my heart beats high with expectation, and every faculty of my soul is on fire with the impatient hope. 'T is but three days before the grande catastrophe arrives; yet do they seeme so manie ages! Bee you more cool to attend the longed-for issue, or you will bee little able to carry on the charge entrusted to your care, and on which depends not onely our lives, but fortune and fame! Indulge in secret the swelling rapture; but let no outward sign of joy appear, till you are past prevention in the arms of

"M. R."

Neither is there much "mistake" about this, or much coy dissemblance of affection. Of a truth she had in aforetime suffered much persecution for his sake—much anxiety lest the nation should oppose their union — and infinite dissuasion from certain ones of her counsellors: and such is the inherent perversity of human nature, and has been through all ages, that if there be an object which is hard to be obtained, or withheld from our grasp, that object is the thing we desire, and the one we most wish to possess.

We should not conclude the narrative of the loves of Mary and Bothwell in a manner either just or perfect, if we omitted to give the marriage contracts, for there were two of them—which were about this time drawn up, and by the authority of which they were bound round with the cords of matrimony. The first of these twain is written in antiquated French; it is taken from the Cotton Library, and is signed by the Queen only. It runs as follows:—

"Nous Marie, par la grace de Dieu, Royne d'Escosse, douaryère de France, &c., promettons fidellement, et de bonne foy, et sans contraynte, à Jaques Hepburn Conte be Boduel, de n'avoir jamays autre espoulx et mary que luy, et de le prendre pour tel toute et quant fois qu'il m'en requerira, quoy que parents, amys ou autres, y soient contrayres. Et puis que Dieu a pris mon feu mary Henry Stuart, dit Darnlay, et que par ce moin je sois libre, n'estant soubs obeïsance de père, ni de mère, dès mayntenant je proteste que, luy estant en mesme liberté, je seray preste, et d'accomplir les cérémonies dequises au marriage: que je luy promets devant Dieu que j'en prantz à temoignasge, et la presente, signée de ma mayne; écrit ce——[no date.]

"Marie R."

Craving the amiable reader's further indulgence we will also lay before him or her, a copy of the

second contract ; seeing that as we have gone thus far into the matter, we could scarcely come creditably out of it, unless we furnished every information that is to be culled from ancient chronicles, or found in the archives of the curious. Wherefore this document here ensueth, *videlicet* :——

Marriage Contract.

" At Seyton, the fifth day of April, in the year of God, 1567. The right excellent, right high and mighty Princess Mary, by the grace of God Queen of Scots, consideringe the place and estate wherein Almightie God hath constituted her Highnesse, and how by the decease of the Kinge her husband her Majestie is now destitute of a husband, livinge solitary in the state of widowhoode, in the which kinde of life her Majestie most willingly woulde continue, if the will of her realm and subjects would permit it. But on the other parte, consideringe the inconveniences may follow, and the necessitie which the realm hath that her Majestie be coupled with an husband, her Highnesse hath an inclination to marry ; and seeinge what incommodity may come to this realm, in case her Majestie should joyne in marriage with any foreign prince of a strange nation, her Highnesse has thought rather to yield unto one of her own subjects ; amongst whom, her Majestie finds none more able, nor endued with better qualities, than the right

noble, and her dear cousin James Earl Bothwell, &c. Of whose thankful and true service her Highnesse in all the times bye-past has had large proof and infallible experience. And seeinge not onely the same good mind constantlie persevering in him, but with that an inward affection and hearty love towards her Majestie, her Highnesse amongst the rest hath made her choice of him.

"And therefore, in the presence of the eternall God, faithfully, and in the word of a Prince, by these presents takes the said James, Earl Bothwell, as her lawful husband, and promises and obliges her Highness that, as soon as the processe of divorce intended betwixt the said Earl Bothwell and Dame Jane Gordon, now his pretended spouse, be ended by the order of the laws, her Majestie shall, God willing, thereafter shortlie marry, and take the said Earl to her husband, and compleat the band of matrimony with him in the face of Holy Church; and shall never marry any other husband but him onely during his lifetime. And as her Majestie, of her gracious humanitie and proper motive, without deserving of the said Earl, hath thus inclined her favour and affection towards him, he humbly and reverently acknowledging the same, according to his bounden dutie, and being as free and able to make promise of marriage, in respect of the said process of divorce intended for divers reasonable causes, and that the

said pretended spouse hath thereunto consented, he presentlie takes her Majestie as his lawful spouse, in the presence of God; and promises and obligeth him, as he will answere to God, and upon his fidelitie and honour, that in all diligence possible, he shall prosecute and set forward the said process of divorce already began and intended betwixt him and the said Dame Jane Gordon, his pretended spouse, unto the final end of a decree and declaration therein.

"And incontinent thereafter, at her Majesty's good will and pleasure, and when her Highnesse thinks convenient, shall compleat and solemnise in face of holie church, the said band of matrimonie with her Majestie, and love, honour, and serve her Highnesse, accordinge to the place and honour that it hath pleased her Majestie to accept him unto, and never to have any other to his wife during her Majesty's life time. In faith and witnessing wherefore, her Highnesse and the said Earl hath subscribed this present faithful promise with their hands, as followeth, day, year, and place aforesaid, before these witnesses; George Earl Huntley, and Master Thomas Hepburn, Parson of Old Hanstock, &c.

"Sic subscribitur, MARY R.

JAMES, EARL BOTHWELL."

They were married, gentle reader — not at

Gretna Green—albeit it was altogether a match not much more discrete than many "Gretna Green weddings," so called; and they lived afterwards as happily as many others have done, who have been united to each other within the boundary of that amorous parish.

CHAPTER XIX.

The Lord Scroop, and the Bold Buccleuch.—The false Sakelde —Willie o'Kinmont captured and rescued.

The Bold Buccleuch was bold forsooth—
Which if you do not credit,
Just read this chapter, and, in truth,
You will, when you have read it.

Spottiswood, one of the most especial historiographers of Scottish affairs in the sixteenth century, relates how a matter befel which well nigh put both kingdoms in a flame; but besides him, we have an old ballad on the subject, which has been sung by glee-man and minstrel ever since, not only on the hills of Gretna, but in distant regions also; —and again, besides these authorities, we have still another far more authentic, in a most unerring tradition, which so far supersedes all other that we cannot now do better than found this chapter mainly upon it.

The Lord Scroop, Warden of the Western Marches, and the great Laird of Buccleuch,

keeper of Liddesdale, established a truce, for the purpose of arranging some trifling things between them in an amicable manner; and to this end they met, or rather their agents met, at a place ycleped Dayholme of Kershop, where a small brook divided England from her northern sister, and more particularly the dale of Liddel from Bawcastle. The deputy for Queen Elizabeth's warden was Mr. Sakelde, or Salkeld, of a powerful family of Cumberland, possessing, amongst other manors, that of Corby, before it came into the possession of the Howards in the seventeenth century. When truce had been proclaimed by sound of trumpet, as the custom then was, the commissioners met in friendly sort, and arranged their grievance to satisfaction, after which they parted courteously.

Meanwhile, howbeit, it fortuned that William Armstrong, commonly called Willie of Kinmont, who had been in the company of the Scots' negotiator, but against whom the English had a quarrel, as his good name had been sullied by sundry ancient depredations, was pursuing his way homeward alone, by the grassy margin of the river Liddel. The English party also wending homeward, as the conference was ended, espying Willie, gave hue-and-cry with loud voices, and, after chasing him for several miles, took him prisoner and bore him away to Carlisle. This deed was in direct violation of the existing truce, which would

not be elapsed until sun-rising the next day. Wherefore Buccleuch, as guardian over Liddesdale, where this matter befel, wrote certain missives to Sakelde, complaining of injustice; he returned for answer, that forsooth he could do nothing, as the Lord Scroop had gone away for a short space: then Buccleuch sent to Scroop where he was, and craved that the prisoner might be enfranchised as he had been unlawfully taken; and then the English warden replied that, verily he could not possibly enlarge the said prisoner without knowing the Queen's pleasure to that effect: then the Laird of Buccleuch wrote advices to good Master Bowes, the resident ambassador from England, who wrote remonstrances to the Lord Scroop, who—took no notice of the letter. After that, King James was told of the transaction, who sent to Elizabeth, who promised fair, but who—performed nothing.

The Scottishmen, feeling their sacred honour wounded at these repeated slights and evasions, determined to brook them no longer; but boldly planned a measure to surprise Carlisle Castle and liberate their countryman.

We are told, that when "the false Sakelde" secured Kinmont, he tied his hands behind his back, and guarded him fivesome on each side with hagbut-men, so that he should not eschew their vigilance and escape away of their clutches. He also bound his ankles together with cords under-

neath the body of his horse, absolutely making saddle-girths of his legs, so that he not only could not elude his captors, but furthermore, he was totally unable to rise in his saddle when his beast trotted—a fact that gives one an idea of concussion of the brain when one thinks of it, or of a sore chafing of the seat, or peradventure, owing to the jerking and jolting, of biting the end of one's tongue off, unless it were carefully kept from getting between the teeth.

They then conducted him through the Liddel-rack, a ford on that river, over Solway Moss, the Debateable Land, across the sands of Carlisle that then spread their marishlike and quaking expanse about the mouth of the Eden; then over the Sacery, or plain beneath the castle walls, whereon Peredur, the Prince of Sunshine, so gallantly tilted with the discourteous knight, and lastly into the fortress, where he was delivered up to durance vile.

His friends, north of Hadrian's rampire, conceived infinite indignation at what they considered a piece of the greatest treachery ever practised; so they enterprised to achieve one of the most daring and well-conducted exploits of that age. All the ancient chroniclers unite in lauding it in goodly terms. "Audax facinus cum modica manu, in urbe mœnibus et multitudine oppidanorum munita, et calidæ audaciæ, vix ullo obsisti

modo potuit."—[*Johnstoni Historia.*] And Birrel, in his Diary for April 6, 1596, says, the deed was done "with shouting and crying, and sounde of trumpet, puttand the said toun and countrie in sic ane fray, that the like of sic ane wassalage was nevir done since the memorie of man, no not in Wallace dayis."

Queen Elizabeth was not only much angered against her northern neighbours for their bearing in this affair, but she had been before exasperated with Buccleuch because he had retaliated against a party of English who had ravaged Liddesdale, by a counter raid into Cumberland, on which occasion he took six and thirty thieves, all of whom he did to death. Her resentment is well set forth in the preface of her epistle to her ambassador Bowes, where she says, speaking of king James,—"I wonder how base-minded that king thinks me, that, with patience, I can digest this dishonourable * * * *. Let him know, therefore, that I will have satisfaction, or else * * * *." These broken words of ire, observes Sir Walter of Abbotsford, are inserted betwixt the subscription and the address of the letter.

So strong was the inveteracy of feeling toward Buccleuch, — an inveteracy perhaps engendered partly through jealousy of his bold exploits,—that his sordid foes, who were impotent to cope with him in direct fight, at one time appear to have

formed the design of privily assassinating him; a cowardly plan, which one would scarcely look for even in a barbarous age, when hardy courage was one of the chiefest virtues, and when instances of rude yet praiseworthy chivalry, or of savage yet honourable generosity, not infrequently occurred between hostile parties.

When Willie o' Kinmont found himself in the power and iron fetters of the Lord Warden, his doughty spirit, which had been a part of his nature from his cradle upwards, was nothing stricken in fear or dismay; and neither was he one whit cowed, though now in the presence of his very foe, who made no bones of death, dooming his flesh to the carrion crows.

"Albeit my arm is tied, yet is my tongue free," cried he, in answer to the taunts which they heaped upon him; "and who is there among ye that will avow this deed, or will endure the penalty of the Border Law now in the time of plighted truce; or who among ye will dare answer to it in the face of my bold kinsman Buccleuch of Branksome?"

"Hold thy tongue, thou rank rover!" was the instant reply; "prate not of thy bold kinsman, for there is never a Scot in the land that shall set thee free. Know, Sir Marchman, that ere ye cross the castle gate, ye shall take a lasting farewell of me."

"Deal me death an ye will, my lord," returned the prisoner, "and fear ye nothing for me; but by the faith o' my body I say, that I never yet lodged in a hostelrie, but I paid my reckoning well to the contentment of mine host ere I departed away."

"Stint your misruled taunts here, slave! What ho, guards! bear him away to the lower dungeon. We will see who is the true Lord of the castle!"

And Kinmont was hurried away in despite, and dismally encarcered in the dank and murky prison of the donjon, until such time as he should be brought out to the hairibee, and hung up by the bare neck.

But the issue of this misfare had been reported to Buccleuch of Branksome; and there, as he sat at meat in his panneled hall, with his vassals about him and his villains below the salt, he seized hold of the table in his agony; he raised the cup, brimming with red wine, on high, and he swore by a terrible oath, that of a truth he would be avenged of the Lord Scroop for this deed.

"And is my basnet but a widow's curch," cried he; "or my lance but the wand of a willow-tree, or my arm but like the lilly hand of a lady, that the English Warden should thus set me at nought? And have they really taken Kinmont Willie, forgetting of the truce now betwixt us?

and have they forgotten that the bold Buccleuch is keeper here on the Scottish side? And have they indeed taken him withouten dread of my puissance, and without remembering that Buccleuch truly can back a steed and shake a spear? Were there but war between the two lands, as I wot well there is not, I would bring down the towering battlements of Carlisle, albeit they were builded of marble stone! Yea, even so would I set those walls in a flame, and then cool them again in English blood! There 's never a man in Cumberland should ken where Carlisle Castle stood!"

Such was the first burst of Buccleuch's rage; and he only regretted that there was no war between the kingdoms, because this amicable fact denied him the power of suffering his vengeance to run wild over the Border. We might suppose, however, that the unjust captivation of his friend, and the general practice of the Law of Talion, would have permitted him to give full liberty to his wrath and his drawn sword; but, to his high praise be it spoken, he appears to have been a man of a better nature, and one who would not return wrong for wrong, absolutely for the sake of so doing, but only so far as to chastise his enemies as should seem due to them.

"Wherefore," continued he in a milder tone, "since there is no strife waging between my liege

lord and the queen's majesty of the south country, but rather peace as peace should be, I will hurt neither English lad nor lass;—but yet, an it please heaven, I swear that Kinmont shall surely be set free."

The exploit that he now undertook to achieve, is characterised as one of the last, and one of the most gallant that befel in these parts; one of the last, because the most high, mighty, and magnificent empress, renowned for piety, virtue, and all gracious government, Elizabeth, by the Grace of God, Queen of England, France, and Ireland, and of Virginia, Defender of the Faith, &c., was well stricken in years, and had not much longer to wear an earthly crown; and one of the most gallant, because the basement of the motive from which it sprung was not laid in the mire of an evil desire for outrage, but upon a philanthropic sympathy toward a kinsman, who, as he and they believed, had been foully dealt with.

He called about him forty stalwart marchmen, all of his own name, saving only the knight Sir Gilbert Elliot, Laird of Stobs; and these assembled in right order for the enterprise, bravely vestured with spur on heel and splent on spauld, with glaives of green, and with feathers o' blue. He marshaled them by fives, that they might proceed with the greater discipline and surety; two com-

panies of five each led the van, bearing bright bugles and hunting-horns: then came Buccleuch himself, flanked by five and five on either hand, armed at all points like Warders' men arrayed for fight; after that there were ten of them carrying ladders for the purpose of scaling the walls, all of them wearing the semblance of half a score working masons; and lastly, there came twice five, who, like broken men, or men of no consideration, dispersed themselves about to act as discoverers against ambush.

Thus they departed away from Branksome, and thus they attained to the Woodhouselee, a house on the border of Buccleuch's territory.

Nine-and-twently knights of fame hung their shields in Branksome Hall; — nine-and-twenty squires of name brought them their steeds from bower to stall; — nine-and-twenty yeomen tall, waited duteous, on them all: they were all knights of mettle true—kinsmen to the bold Buccleuch. Thus the reader will easily conceive how puissant a chieftain lived in this castelet, and how strong a consanguineous force he could back an argument with against his foe.

Such was the disordered state of the times, that these warriors, for the most part, stood ready harnessed in steel, or else when they lay down to sleep they pillowed their helmets (with their heads inside) upon their cold and hard blucklers. They

sat down to the oaken table at banquet time with their gauntlets about their wrists; their horses stood ready caparisoned at need; and a vigilant watch toward England was kept up at night,—such was the custom of Branksome Hall. But if ye be curious to learn more touching the customs of this great Bastle-house, we refer ye to the Lay that whilom was sung by the Last Minstrel of the clan. They then crossed the Debateable Land, and entered into England, when who should be the very first man they met, but the false Sakelde himself!—he forsooth, that had foully taken Willie of Kinmont! Credat Lector!—but it is recorded true in history—and, what is better, in tradition too.

"Where are ye going ye keen hunters?" said he to the first ten, who he perceived were furnished with horns and bugles.

"We are going to hunt an English stag," was the ready answer, "that has trespassed on the Scots' country."

After that he perceived the next decade bearing Jedworth axes and smutty crackis of war. "And where are you going?" cried he, "come, tell me true, ye marshalmen?"

"We are going to catch a rank rover," was their reply, "who has broken faith with the bold Buccleuch."

Then followed the pseudo-masons bearing the tall scaling ladders upon their shoulders; and these

might have readily excited his surprise. He accosted them incontinently with a similar demand, and they, too, were prepared for him :—

" Where are ye going, ye mason lads, with your long and high ladders ? "

" Oh," returned they, " we are going to herry a corbie's nest, that rides in the wind high upon a tree-top not far from Woodhouselee."

This seemed all very good and very passable ; and lastly, amongst the company, he encountered the discoverers.

" And now, ye broken men, come tell me whither ye are going ? "

But here the answer was not so mysterious or evasive ; neither was it a blunt answer that was returned to him, but rather the contrary ; and if it were not a blunt answer, it was peradventure a short one.

The legend saith, that one Dickie of Deghope was the leader of this band ; a man not given to words, and one who, nevertheless, could scarcely be called a peaceable man ; he was a plain blunt man, like Antony, having neither wit, nor words, nor worth, action nor utterance, nor the power of speech to stir men's blood with flossy declamation : he was no orator, as Brutus was, but only spoke right on ;—and in this instance he used cutting words indeed.

A sudden paroxysm of choler appears to have

seized upon the false Sakelde against these borderers; for if his demeanour had hitherto been at all courteous, assuredly now, the spirit of his bearing had changed to rough.

"Why trespass ye," cried he, "on the English side, ye raw-footed outlaws?"

He had better have schooled his speech to a more gentle tenour! but in a voice of thunder he added the single imperative word, "Stand!"

Now these "raw-footed outlaws," had no idea of listening unmoved to such terms; wherefore Dickie, without taxing his tongue to answer a syllable, forthwith ran his long lance into his body —aye, right through and through, in on one side and out at the other!

This chevisance having been accomplished, and the false Sakelde having been amply reguerdoned for his former misdeeds, the whole company held on their way for Carlisle, leaving him quiet on the moss, and "as dead as a nayle-doore."

They crossed the river Eden at Staneshaw bank; but the waters were high and the fords were deep, and wonder it was that man and horse were not carried away to destruction; but praised be Ourisk the Bogle of the muir, the flood Kelpie Gilpin Horner, and the rest of that fraternity, they landed safe on the opposite rivage, without any loss whatsoever. Here they took the precaution of leaving their steeds, and of proceeding on foot, lest they

should stamp or neigh, and thereby betray them to the sentinels. The wind was blowing, and the surcharged clouds were weeping plenteously upon their heads; it was a wild and blustrous night; but the hardy Scots cared little for the elements, so they compassed their purpose.

When they came under the castle wall, they held their breath and crept stealthily upon their knees: they placed their ladders from the slope even up to the top of the battlements; and, so eager was Buccleuch himself, that he was the first to mount. On jumping upon the leads, the bold leader encountered the watchman: him he seized by the throat, and overcame with an iron-bound grasp, at the same time telling him that had there not been peace between the two kingdoms, it should have gone harder with him; but now, for the nonce, his life was still his own. Here have we another mention of his clemency in sparing this man's life; the Sotchman's aim not being murder and revengement, but the rescue of his countryman only.

"Now, sound our trumpet," cried he to his followers, who by this time were on the leads around him: "now let us waken up Lord Scroop right merrily," and the brazen blast tore along through the still passages of the fortress, and drummed upon the ears of the startled sleepers. This was speedily answered by the grating reson-

ance of the warder's horn, a sound of alarum that roused every one from drowsy forgetfulnes to life, activity, and amazement. In a moment every couch was deserted—every wight used his legs to fetch his arms, hastily running he scarce knew whither, to meet he knew not what foe.

"Who is it that dares meddle with me?" roared the Lord Scroop at the top of his voice: but the forty marchmen raised the slogan one and all, and the terror-stricken English, hardly having yet shaken off the remembrance of their dreams, believed that King James and his whole Scottish army were amongst them.

Buccleuch and his men immediately cut a hole in the lead on the roof, and through this they let themselves down withinside: they first went to the hall bearing every obstacle before them; and albeit there were a thousand warriors garrisoned there in the castle, such was their surprise, such the darkness, and such the panic, that their invaders were allowed to sweep forward like a torrent. With coulters taken from the plough, and with massy fore-hammers, they beat down doors, partitions, and stout bars, irresistibly breaking their way onward to the inner prison. When they had wrenched out the bolts and the beams that had so strongly sealed up this dismal dungeon, there of a truth they discovered the wretched prisoner who had been adjudged to die at daylight.

"Are you asleep, or are you awake, Willie o' Kinmont, now on the morning when you are doomed to die?"

"Oh!" returned he resolutely, for he thought it was the executioner come to lead him forth; "Oh! I sleep softly, though I wake sometimes; it is a long while since my foes were able to scare sleep away from me. Give my service back to my wife and bairns in Scotland, and to all the good fellows that ask after me—and then you shall see how a brave man can die on the Hairibee."

But Willie was soon better instructed in the personage of his visitor, and cheerily enlightened as to the veritable state of the matter in his favour: the vision of the hangman dissolved away before his mind when the actual form of his ancient friend Red Rowan stood beside him, and with his eloquent tongue poured welcome news of his deliverance into his hungry ears.

This "starkest man in Teviotdale," as the ballad calls him, was then hoisted up from his noisome cell, and was being led away in triumph towards the scaling ladders still leaning against the embrasures of the battlements, that he might see the outside of the walls, whereon the sun would shine bright, as soon as the orb of day should climb over the eastern hill: but he cried out to his comrades to stint their haste for a space, saying, forsooth, that it would be an uncourteous thing not to bid

the Lord Scroop good-night, before he departed from his lodgings.

This act of civility being well commended, he forthwith sought the presence; and when he stood fronting the blustrous warden, he exclaimed,—"Farewell, farewell! my gude Lord Scroop; we will now part company for this present if it consort with your liking; but believe me, I will bounteously pay you my rent here, the very first time that we meet on the other side of the border." And with these words he turned about and made for the leads.

But the irons that had been riveted on his legs so hindered his walking, that Red Rowan mounted him upon his shoulders, and with a shout of exultation, bore him down the ladder and along the flats, whilst the irons clanked loudly as Rowan ran.

"Many a time," quoth Kinmont Willie, "have I ridden a horse; but a rougher beast than this, I ween my legs never bestrode."

No matter—on they went joyously through brake and through dingle, through the sedges and reeds that covered the low grounds, and through the gullies and pools that lay in their rugged course:—"And many a time," said he again, "have I pricked a horse out over the furrows, but since the first day I backed a steed, I never yet wore such a cumbrous pair of spurs."

But the castellain, whom they had left behind, was not idle, nor did he purpose suffering him to escape scot-free in this fashion.

Scarcely had they attained to the Staneshaw bank, with the intention of recrossing the Eden, than they heard all the alarum bells of the cathedral and churches of Carlisle toll loudly to rouse the citizens to arms and pursuit. But, like Susannah, "they got the start and kept it," although their pursuers were close upon their heels when they had proceeded thus far. On arriving at the margin of this stream, up came my Lord Scroop, backed with a thousand horse and foot, netted in chain mail, and tiled over with plates of steel, upon the polished faces of which the first rays of the nascent morning were beginning to fall. On moved the host over the heath, like a giant porcupine, whose prickly back was bristled with pikes, halberds, and spears, pointing to the sky. Yet the bold Buccleuch, still keeping what he had before got—that is the start,—plunged into the swollen river, now crowned to the brim by recent rains, and swam safely over in the face of this army, together with the whole of his company. Being on the other side, he turned him round to his pursuer, and addressed to him these words

"If ye like na my visit in merry England, in fair Scotland come visit me."

My Lord Scroop is represented as being not a little astonished at what he had conceived to have been an impossible feat in the then state of the torrent; for it was on the 13th of April, immediately after a vast fall of rain, such as sometimes comes down in the north during the early spring.

"He stood as still as a rock of stane," marveling at the hazardry of his foes; and then turning to one that stood beside him he observed—

"He is either himsell a devil fra hell, or else his mother a witch maun be; I would na have ridden that wan water for all the gold in Christentie."

Bishop Spottiswood, to whom we have alluded in the beginning of this chapter, says that the Scotts found their scaling ladders too short for mounting over the battlements; and that they, in consequence, effected an entry near the postern door by means of crowbars, wrenching-irons, and the like. He also says, that they amounted in all to two hundred horse, and not to merely forty diversely-attired men as above related. The bishop, howbeit, is only an authentic historian, and not deserving of any credit, whereas the other account is pure tradition, and poetry all written in verse. The courteous and most discerning reader may, therefore, easily judge of what is likely to be the real truth.

The historian proceeds to say that — "The

Queen of England, having notice sent her of what was done, stormed not a little. One of her chief castles surprised, a prisoner carried away, so far within England, she esteemed a great affront. The lieger, Mr. Bowes, in a frequent convention kept at Edinburgh, the 22nd of May, (the same year, 1596,) did, as he was charged, in a long oration, aggravate the heinousness of the fact, concluding that peace could not longer continue betwixt the two realms, unless Buccleuch were delivered in England, to be punished at the queen's pleasure.

" Buccleuch compearing, and charged with the fact, made answere—' That he went not into Englande with intention to assault any of the queen's houses, or to do wrong to any of her subjects, but only to relieve a subject of Scotland unlawfully taken, and more unlawfully detained; that, in the time of a general assurance, in a day of truce, he was taken prisoner against all order; neither did he attempt his reliefe till redresse was refused; and that he had carried the business in such a moderate manner, as no hostilitye was committed, nor the least wrong offered to any within the castle. Yet was he content, accordinge to the ancient treaties observed between the two realms, when as mutual injuries were alleged, to be tried by the commissioners that it should please their majesties to appoint, and submit himself to that which they should decern.' "

This was considered quite satisfactory to all but the haughty Elizabeth. The matter was again negociated—put off—the Laird amused himself with other raids *pendente lite*—commissioners were once more appointed—James was fidgety and testy — Elizabeth passionate — and finally Buccleuch rendered himself up at St. Andrews. He was afterwards conducted into England, where we conclude that the misunderstanding was adjusted without much difficulty; for we see him soon liberated from restraint, and free to return home. Wherefore he directed his course northward, recrossed the border, and once again found himself the undisputed Laird of Branksome; — and so ended this business.

Although the untractable spirit of the Dalesmen on the borders had given way in a slight degree to a more peaceable demeanour since James VI. had become James I., they still, at times, as the politics, or state of affairs, or contentions, in either or both kingdoms allowed, were ever ready to fall to their old practices. As both sides of the frontier were inhabited by a population which acknowledged themselves as subjects to the same king, that principle of animosity which had whilome subsisted betwixt men of different interests, and differently-placed allegiance, was now in a material degree expunged; and add to this, the articles which were agreed upon by the commissioners sent for the purpose, by which all persons who were not

gentlemen of rank and repute, were obliged to surrender their offensive weapons and deadly missiles of war; it was recommended that all feuds should in future be made up by mutual agreement and the arbitrement of friends, instead of resorting to fierce combat as of old; that those who obstinately refused this counsel should be heavily mulcted; that all thieves and robbers should be punished with death; and it was enacted, "that all inhabiting within Tindale and Riddesdale in Northumberland, Bewcastledale, Wilgavey, the north part of Gilsland, Esk and Leven in Cumberland, East and West Tevidale, Liddesdale, Eskdale, Ewsdale, and Annerdale, in Scotland, (saving noblemen and gentlemen unsuspected of felony or theft, and not being of broken clans,) and their household servants dwelling within those several places before recited, shall put away all armour and weapons, daggers, steel-caps, hagbuts, pistols, plate sleeves, and such like; and shall not keep any horse, gelding, or mare above the price of fifty shillings sterling, or thirty pounds Scots, upon like pain of imprisonment.

"*Item*,—That proclamation be made, that none of what calling soever, within the countries lately called the Borders of either of the kingdoms, shall wear, carry, or bear any pistols, hagbuts, or guns of any sort, but in his majesty's service, upon pain of imprisonment, according to the laws of either kingdom."

These were very precautionary and judicious enactments, but "the final Pacification of the Borders," as it was called, was not so "final," and immediate as was intended. Men, who all their lives had been brought up to hold law at defiance, and who had been nurtured on the proceeds of rapine, were not likely to respect it all at once: and thus we find, that, during the troublous reign of Charles I., even so long as forty years after these regulations had been made, the moss-troopers readily resumed their ancient pastime by making raids and forays over the frontier.

In the reign of Charles II., as also during the usurpation of Cromwell, we learn their existence still continued, by the statutes directed against them. In the Essay on Border Antiquities, a letter from Cromwell's head-quarters at Edinburgh is quoted, in which this is mentioned. "My last," says the writer, "told you of a letter to be sent to Colonels Kerr and Straughan, from hence. Satturday the 26th, the commissary-general dispatcht away a trumpet with that letter, as also gave another to the Sheriff of Cumberland, to be speeded away to M. John Scot, bailiff, and B., brother to the Lord of Buccliew, for his demanding restitution upon his tenants the moss-troopers, *for the horses by them stolne* the night we quartered in their country, since which, promises hath been made of restitution, and we doubt not to

receive it very suddenly, or else to take satisfaction another way ourselves."

If it has ever taken three generations to make a gentleman, so also, it took quite as many to make an honest man out of a Liddesdale thief.

Charles II. found it necessary to proceed against them by divers legal enactments, the preambles of which all stated in substance — "Whereas, a great number of lewd, disorderly, and lawless persons, being thieves and robbers, who are commonly called *moss-troopers*, have successively for many years past been bred, resided in, and frequented the borders of the two respective counties of Northumberland and Cumberland, and the most adjacent parts of Scotland; and they, taking the opportunity of the large waste ground, heaths, and mosses, and the many intricate dangerous ways and by-paths in those parts, do usually, after the most notorious crimes committed by them, escape over from the one kingdom to the other respectively, and so avoid the hand of justice, in regard the offences done and perpetrated in the one kingdom cannot be punished in the other.

"And whereas, since the time of the late unhappy distractions, such offences and offenders as aforesaid have exceedingly more increased and abounded; and the several inhabitants of the said respective counties have been, for divers years last past, necessitated, at their own free and voluntary

charge, to maintain several parties of horse for the necessary defence of their persons, families, and goods, and for bringing the offenders to justice."

Upon this preamble follow orders for assessing the inhabitants of these disturbed districts in the sums requisite for paying a body of men, which should be efficiently armed and appointed, to keep peace and safety throughout the frontier.

However fanatical and righteous-over-much the non-conformist preachers might have been, however ultra-vehement, and however unnecessarily enthusiastic they might have displayed themselves, certain it is, they were the first who worked a beneficial alteration in the morals of this misgoverned race of outlaws; for such appears evident from a passage in the life of Richard Cameron, that same who gave name to the sect yeleped Cameronians.

"After he was licensed, they sent him at first to preach in Annandale. He said, how could he go there? He knew not what sort of people they were. But Mr. Welch said, 'Go your way, Ritchie, and set the fire of hell to their tails.' He went, and the first day he preached upon the text, *How shall I put thee among the children*, &c. In the application he said, 'Put you among the children! the offspring of robbers and thieves! Many have heard of Annandale thieves.' Some of them got a merciful cast that day, and told it

afterwards, that it was the first field-meeting that ever they attended; and that they went out of curiosity to see how a minister could preach in a tent, and people sit on the ground.' " *

If we may believe Cleland, a Cameronian himself, we may, in the first place, conceive the depravity of these "Tacking Men," or arrant rogues, and afterwards their wholesome conversion. He says,—

> "For instance, lately on the Borders,
> There was nought but theft and murders,
> Rapine, cheating, and resetting,
> Slight-of-hand—and fortunes getting:
> Their designation as ye ken,
> Was all along, the *Tacking Men*."

Further on he proceeds to notice the great change that had come over them, and how eagerly they sought after the itinerant preachers:

> "Yea, those that were the greatest rogues,
> Follow them over hills and bogues,
> Crying for mercy and for preaching,
> For they 'll now hear no others' teaching."
>
> *Cleland's Poems*, 1697, p. 30.

* Harrie's Scottish Worthies.

CHAPTER XX.

The "Pretender."

Of two "Pretenders" ye have heard,
Who troubled Scotland erst:
To each we must devote a word—
So now then for the first.

The Revolution of 1688 in England, and the accession of William, gave cheering hopes of toleration to the Presbyterian party in Scotland, at whose head was the Duke of Hamilton. The Duke of Gordon, on the other hand, openly avowed his purpose of maintaining the declining interests of James, who had now just abdicated his throne and retired to France; and to this end he shut himself up in the castle of Edinburgh.

The interests of the new dynasty, however, gained the ascendancy, despite a long and bitter animosity that raged between the contending parties; so that the old Jacobites, after suffering much persecution and defeat, were reduced to

insignificance, or entirely crushed,—at least for a time.

James tried his fortune in Ireland; but when he had marched over the country with his invading forces, and had achieved one or two slight advantages, he was overcome at the battle of the Boyne, and enforced to fly back to Louis, and ensconce himself in his former lodgings at St. Germains.

The barbarous massacre of Glencoe, perpetrated at the instigation of the Earl of Breadalbane against the Macdonalds, partly for state purposes to drive terror into the hearts of the Jacobites, and partly from private hate existing between this nobleman and the highland chief, took place in February 1692. King William tried in every way to excuse himself for having signed the order for this cruel deed; but the horror and rage which sprung up among the former king's faction against his person and government by reason of it, was so great, not only in Scotland, but also in England, Ireland, and France, as to cause him much opposition, perplexity, and trouble, during the whole of his reign afterwards.

In the session of the Scottish parliament, assembled three years subsequently, the question of its cause was agitated very loudly by the members; and a motion was made requiring the commissioners to exhibit their share in this affair for the

satisfaction of the country, together with a report of the king's instructions thereon, the depositions of certain witnesses which had been examined, and copies of Secretary Dalrymple's letters, as he especially had been suspected of exceeding his instructions from the government. They begged that William would give such orders about him as he should think fit in vindication of himself and his government touching so atrocious a slaughter; that the actors concerned in it should be prosecuted by the king's advocate, according to law; that those who had escaped actual murder, should be indemnified for their loss of property by plunder and fire sustained at the time; and that, for the peace of the country and the justification of all men innocent of participation or countenance there anent, the inquiry and the result arrived at, should be freely published and made known throughout every valley and over every highland mountain.

A great deal of dissimulation, hypocrisy, and procrastination, however, was practised during the course of these things; and though some show of compliance with the injured party was manifested at Westminster, still little was done in bringing the participators to justice, or of satisfying and appeasing the Scotch nation.

One of the earliest questions that threatened anarchy and disorder between the two unsisterly

kingdoms was the final Treaty of Union. Queen Anne had appointed the Duke of Queensbury her High Commissioner to treat of this business north the Border; and on the third day of October, 1706, he presented her Majesty's letter to the nation. It set forth the great advantages likely to accrue to the whole island in the event of a perfect and entire union,—that it would bring about a community of interests amongst all orders of men, than which nothing so much promotes friendship; that it would lay the foundations of a solid and ever-enduring peace between both moieties of the land; that it would go far to soften down the long-existing feuds, animosities, and rebellions of hostile parties; that it would increase their strength, their riches, their commerce; and that it would combine them all into one mass in support of the Protestant established religion, ensure their liberties at home, and render them superior to the assaults of their enemies abroad.

Notwithstanding this measure seemed to promise so fairly, yet there was a powerful faction with whom it held out anything but what was desirable. The stock of the exiled James was still flourishing, and this faction craved nothing so much as to see it recalled from a foreign soil, and re-established where it had heretofore swayed the sceptre. Hence arose the subsequent efforts of the Pretender.

The Jacobite party in Scotland made no scruple openly to avow their principles, and the Duchess of Gordon presented to the Faculty of Advocates a silver medal, representing the Chevalier de St George, the reverse bearing the British Islands, with the motto "Reddite:" and for this mark of favour they formally thanked her for having given them a medal of "their Sovereign Lord the King."

The house of peers soon began to resound with boisterous harangues about the Catalans and the Chevalier, setting forth the danger with which the Protestant succession was threatened. The Catalans represented that Great Britain had encouraged them to declare for the House of Austria, with offers of support; and complained that these promises had not been made good. Lord Bolingbroke, however, vindicated the queen, and said that her engagements abided no longer than during such time as King Charles, son of the Emperor of Germany, should reside in Spain, to the sovereignty of which country it had been Anne's policy to assist him. The discussions touching the Pretender were carried forward with a most unheard-of violence: foreign monarchs were requested to aid in extirpating him from the face of the earth; and the Lord Treasurer was charged with having assisted his cause in Scotland, by having for some years past remitted sums of money to the highland

clans, purposely to be expended in his service. The year after George the First came to the throne, namely, in 1715, open warfare was commenced. The Earl of Mar repaired to the Highlands to collect forces; he assembled three hundred of his own vassals; he proclaimed James Stuart King of Great Britain at Castletown; and on the sixth day of September he set up his standard at Brae-Mar at the head of 10,000 men. About this date also, two ships arrived at Arbroath from Havre, laden with arms, ammunition, stores, and a number of officers; and the Earl of Mar was given to understand that the prince was only detained in making some final arrangements, and that he would speedily follow and join his friends.

This he did; but his affairs were desperate, and he was too late to achieve any benefit. His infatuation urged him to hazard his person in Scotland, surrounded by the hostile members of a party infinitely stronger than his own; he left Dunkirk in a French vessel, and landed safely with only six gentlemen in his suite; and, passing unknown through several towns, was met at Feteresso by Mar and about thirty noblemen of high degree. Here he was solemnly proclaimed; and the declaration, dated at Comerey, was printed and dispersed.

General Forster, who headed a strong detachment of the rebel army, invaded England by the

Western Marches. He passed through Gretna, over Solway Moss, and so on southwards *viâ* Carlisle, Penrith, Kendal, Lancaster, to Preston, leading twelve thousand soldiers with him: but here they were met by the Royalists, and necessitated to surrender. Gretna was still the seat of war, up to this most recent period, though we shall soon shew that the buds of love were beginning to open on its genial soil.

The young Stuart made a public entry into Dundee, and thence proceeded to Scone, where he intended to have been crowned. He enjoined the ministers to pray for him in their churches; he ordered thanksgivings for his safe arrival to be made; and though destitute of resources, he went through all the ceremonies of royalty. But the bright sun of his hopes passed its meridian, declined, and set for ever, with rapidity as great as it had arisen. His friends having been beaten in several skirmishes with the troops of his Majesty King George, and having been obliged to fly for safety, or to disperse amongst the mountains, and himself being hotly pursued and pressed by them, he was driven to take present safety in a ship lying in the harbour of Montrose, and to stand out to sea. Fearing lest he should fall in with the English cruisers, that were beating about the coast, seeking whom they might entrap of his party, he ran over to the shores of Norway;

and finally, on reviewing his position, and resolving that no alternative was left, he steered southward, and in a few days once more arrived in France. Ingens telum necessitas, and that better dish which the Parcæ served him, he was reluctantly enforced to accept.

CHAPTER XXI.

Attempt of the Young Pretender,—His advance to Derby.—Retreat to Scotland.—Battle of Culloden.—Present appearance of the Field of Battle.

And now "Pretender" No. II.,
The son of No. I.;
Whatever we can do for you
Shall here be quickly done.

In the king's speech at the meeting of parliament, George I. told his people that he believed James Stuart had again landed in Scotland: an assertion, howbeit, wherein was no truth; yet the discarded scion of royalty was not idle, but was beating up for rescues and reinforcements in the south of Europe, and more especially in Spain.

The Cardinal Alberoni hatched a scheme in his favour, the purport of which was, to invade Britain with a powerful force; so that, encouraged by these offices, the Chevalier de St. George took an opportunity of quitting Urbino, his place of residence by stealth, of embarking at Nettuno, and of sailing to Cagliari, where he landed.

Hence he made his way to Madrid, where he was hailed Monarch of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, with all fitting reverence, dignity, and honour. Ten ships of war, and six thousand regular troops were devoted to his service, and sailed from Cadiz accordingly; but a storm dispersed them off Cape Finisterre, and only two frigates reached their destination. The Spaniards gained a few inconsiderable successes in the highlands; but being pursued by the English commander they were forced to surrender, and three hundred of the invaders were made prisoners.

But we need not dilate on all the other acts and deeds of the Chevalier or his partizans; how he continued to promote conspiracies without intermission; how he candidly avowed in a certain declaration, at the bottom of which his own name appeared, and which was laid before the House of Lords by George I., that if the said King George would only relinquish the kingdom of Great Britain to himself, the Chevalier, he would, in consideration thereof, bestow upon him the title of monarch of his own dominions; and further, that he would secure George's future succession to Britain, if, in time to come, his own issue and heirs apparent, and all other issue and heirs apparent, should absolutely fail;—how Mr. Robert Walpole frightened this nation out of its

wits by detailing in the Commons' House the particulars of a horrid and atrocious conspiracy, purposing to seize the Bank of England and the Exchequer, and to proclaim the Pretender on the Royal Exchange.

Those were stirring times, of a truth, and the demon of ambition was prowling about, seeking whom he might devour. Ambition, however, is only a demon when wrongly directed; for ambition that is directed in the right path, is a fair and honourable passion. He who is ambitious, seeks to better himself; and if he can rise higher in the scale of reputation or of fortune, without doing so to the detriment or prejudice of his fellow-labourers, he only calls into praiseworthy action his faculties, his natural powers, and his talents, (all which were given him to employ properly,) and he is achieving that which is commendable in the sight of God, as well as in the sight of men. We think that the word Ambition is a very much abused word,—in so far, that, according to its usual acceptation, it is held to signify inordinate, unjust, or criminal thirst after advancement. But, ambition in a man, ought to mean, and strictly *does* mean, nothing more or less or otherwise, than what we term emulation in a schoolboy, — that spirit of activity within him, which urges him to fag and to climb to the top of his class.

The Young Pretender, so called, the son of James, the Chevalier de St. George, now started up into action, and resolved to make a bold dash for the crown of Great Britain. His first essay was a failure. With the aid of Louis of France, he collected a fleet and a powerful land force at Dunkirk and Boulogne, and actually embarked seven thousand troops. Monsieur de Roquefeuille sailed up the Channel, and cast anchor off Dungeness, to wait for Monsieur de Barreil, whom he had despatched to hasten the embarkation with five ships of war. As he lay here, he was surprised to see the British fleet under Sir John Norris, doubling the South Foreland, and beating down upon him as fast as the westerly wind, then blowing, would allow. To the chagrin of the English Admiral, however, the tide ran so hard against him, added to the wind, which was dead a-head, that he could not approach Monsieur de Roquefeuille by two leagues; and here also he was obliged to drop his anchor.

Thus, lying within sight of each other, the French commander called a council of war, and it was deemed advisable in their present condition, not to seek an engagement,—but quite the contrary. As if to favour their escape, the wind now suddenly chopped round to the north-east, coming on to blow hard, and they ran before it down Channel like the very——anything you please.

This gale of wind, notwithstanding that it favoured the escape of the line-of-battle ships out of the reach of Sir John Norris's guns, destroyed so many of the French transports, that the present scheme of invasion was obliged to be given up. The famous Count Saxe, who had been preferred to the army, when it should have reached England, together with the other generals under his commandment, returned to Paris; and the young Prince Charles also retiring to his abode in that city, remained for a space in great privity, and almost entirely neglected by the court of St. Germain.

In the year 1744 the Commons of England brought in a bill, denouncing the penalties of high treason against all those who should hold correspondence with the sons of the old Pretender; and in the Upper House, the Lord Chancellor Hardwicke (to whom Gretna Green is much indebted for its fame, as the reader will fully know in good time) inserted a clause, extending the crime of high treason, even to the posterity of the first offenders, during the lives of the Pretender's sons,—as if the rebellious actions of turbulent men could be controlled by their offspring, as yet, peradventure unborn! This was indeed visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children. The motion produced a warm debate, and was most vehemently and pathetically opposed by the Duke of Bed-

ford, the Earl of Chesterfield, and the Lords Hervey and Talbot, as being contrary to the dictates of humanity, the law of nature, the rules of justice in a free country, and the precepts of religion; and yet, *O dii immortales*, the clause was carried, and the bill was passed!

Albeit Charles Edward had been residing quietly on the margin of the Seine since his recent check, yet had he been making inquiry as to the number and strength of his friends, whether on one side of the Channel or on the other; and had furthermore employed emissaries, who had been doing the same thing for him up and down that land, whose crown he so much coveted, and which he piously believed to be his own.

He embarked for Scotland on board a small frigate, accompanied by the Marquis of Tullibardine, Sir Thomas Sheridan, and certain others, and, for the conquest of universal Britain, he brought an almost incalculable force in troops and ammunition—the former consisting of seven officers, and the latter of muskets for two thousand men!

His convoy, a ship of sixty guns, fell in with an English-man-of-war during the passage; and in an engagement with her, she received a rebuff so severe, that she was persuaded to return to Brest, in order to plug up the holes in her hull and to stitch up the rents in her canvass.

The young prince, howbeit, held his course; he steered for the Hebrides, and on the 27th of July 1745, debarked on the coast of Lochaber, where he was joined by fifteen hundred highlanders.

We regret that he did not enter the Firth of Solway, and land upon the sweet shores of Gretna, which was now on the dawn of celebrity — not that we should desire to see hostility carried through so amorous a region, and a region which had for centuries known a great deal too much of the bad spirit of man, as the records of these pages lamentably testify,—but because, in writing the veracious history of this parish, we are naturally desirous of discoursing about any notable events happening therein,—are desirous of declaring how fertile the soil is in interesting occurrences, — and would especially wish to confine ourselves closely to the stage of this drama, and not wander elsewhere to tell of accessaries, however necessarily, though sometimes remotely, bearing on the main subject.

On the nineteenth of August the Marquis of Tullibardine erected his standard at Glensinnan, and though it is true that he was joined by a considerable number of the lovers of the old race, still, the heads of many of the neighbouring clans held back or hesitated to enrol themselves in the hazardry of an enterprise so desperate.

After one or two skirmishes, wherein the new comers triumphed, the government at Westminster became alarmed, and despatched an army northwards to crush them.

King George at this time was in Germany, whither he had gone to pay a visit to his ancient friends, and the Young Pretender's evil genius, the Duke of Cumberland, was hotly at work in the Netherlands, "tickling the French with the long broad-sword," as the popular song of the day expressed it. The Regency that governed the nation during this interim, now issued a proclamation offering the sum of £30,000, to any one who should capture the adventurer: and the beauty of the thing was, that, by way of being in no sort behind the government in courtesy, the Pretender also issued a proclamation, wherein he promised a like sum for the apprehension of the Elector of Hanover!

He prosecuted his march across Scotland,—took several towns on his route, and in Perth, Dundee, and Edinburgh proclaimed the Chevalier de St. George, his father, King of Great Britain. At Preston-pans he routed Sir John Cope in the space of ten minutes; and, by the booty, stores, ammunition, and money, which there fell into his hands, he found himself suddenly rich, and efficiently provided to carry on his pretensions.

After this victory he rested on his oars in Holyrood House much longer than an active

general ought to have done, if he would wisely follow up an advantage gained; but being assured of succours from France, he at last resolved on an invasion of England.

Now, then, we must march directly through Gretna Green.

Having deliberated on his line of progress over the border, he determined on crossing the rubicon by the Western Marches—and here, for "Rubicon," we intreat ye to read "Sark." He marched on foot, dressed (or rather un-dressed) in his Highland costume, at the head of about five thousand men, albeit the weather was cold and the snow lay thick upon the ground; and on the sixth of November he led this host over the tender soil of that amorous parish which lies hard by the blue waters of the Solway;—he forded the aforesaid rubicon along with his naked-kneed followers—crossed the Debateable Land—and then he invested the city of Carlisle.

After he had set himself down before its walls, and had been encamped here for the duration of three days, the citizens either got tired of their own seclusion, shut up as they were, or else they grew right courteous to all those bare-legged visitors who were lying outside in the cold; for certain it is, that at the termination of this period, the gates were thrown open, the portcullises raised, and the draw-bridges lowered, even as is the usage

at such places whose fortifications wear the nature or configuration, or appliances, of the fortifications of the olden time; and then there issued forth of one of the gateways the real mayor himself, dressed in his official investments, together with all the aldermen enrobed in theirs, who walked first under the portcullis without scratching their heads against the spikes, and then over the draw-bridge, on towards the Prince Charles Edward Stuart, otherwise ycleped the Young Pretender. When they came before him they fell down upon their knees and delivered up to his acceptance the keys of their ancient city, making many reverend obeisances with much humility, as if to apologise for their tardiness in coming; and this act will give the reader an idea how faithful King George's public servants were to him at the very particular juncture when he most needed their fidelity — to wit, when strangers were invading his kingdom.

With these keys the royal juvenal speedily let himself into the city and into the castle, where he found a plentiful store of acceptable needments; and incontinently he was proclaimed Regent of Great Britain, and his father King, by the Grace of God, Defender of the Faith, and so forth; and here again, we see how true to their duties the magistrates were, in so heartily seconding the mayor and the aldermen.

Having received goodly assurances from France, that a diversion in his favour would soon be made on the southern coast of England, he left Carlisle, and resolved to march further into the heart of the country; wherefore he proceeded to Penrith, Lancaster, and Manchester. At this last he established his head quarters: he was joined by two hundred Englishmen under Colonel Townley, and the inhabitants greeted his coming with illuminations, bell ringing, and feasting; and even once more we would call the reader's attention to the good service they also were doing to their rightful King George, who sat duly and legally enthroned at St. James's.

It is a beauteous thing for a father to have dutiful children; and so, likewise, it must be a glorious contemplation for a sovereign to behold the stanch fidelity of his people, when his enemies are plotting dire detriment against him.

This last of the Stuarts tarried not long here, but again went forward with all expedition, crossing the Mersey, passing through divers towns, and on the fourth of December attaining as far as Derby. The house wherein he resided during his brief sojourn here, is pointed out to the peregrinator at this day.

He was now within one hundred miles of the metropolis, and all Middlesex was in the greatest

uproar and confusion: a powerful militia was raised and disciplined; volunteers started up on all sides to defend the common cause of their country; the weavers of Spitalfields and other communities entered into precautionary associations; the practitioners of the law, headed by the judges, enrolled themselves on the defensive; and the managers of the theatres offered to raise a body of their dependents for the service of the Government. Orders were given for forming a camp on Finchley Common, where his Majesty, accompanied by the Earl of Stair, field marshal and commander-in-chief of the forces in South Britain, resolved to appear in person. Hogarth's "March to Finchley Common," was painted to celebrate this event.

But the Duke of Cumberland, recently returned from the Low Countries, was hurrying northwards to forbid this young adventurer coming any nearer, as matters had now become serious.

Charles Edward Stuart did not meet with the encouragement or augmentation of strength during his transit that he had been given to expect: with the exception of those who joined him at Manchester, no friends flocked to his standard; the people seemed to be totally averse to his cause; the French had failed to assist him as they had promised; his own generals and companions were disunited among themselves; and

he found himself in the heart of an enemy's country in the depth of winter, and hemmed in between several armies that were hourly approaching him to his destruction.

A council of war was held, and nothing was left but to retreat into Scotland by the route they had come. Having had one or two skirmishes on the way, they once more reached Carlisle, and then, reinforcing the garrison of the castle, they paced the great Moss of Solway, the Debateable Land, and the gentle parish of Gretna Green.

Divers minor affairs befel before they met the Duke of Cumberland on the bleak moor of Culloden, which we need not trouble the patient reader with, because, as we are not writing a history of anything else but Gretna Green, or of such events as are more or less connected therewith, we will not digress more than is necessary. The Prince Pretender's army, on this last and decisive occasion amounted to about four thousand strong; and that of the royal Duke to somewhat more. The action was fierce; but in the space of one half-hour the hopes of the Jacobites were for ever blasted, and many of their heads, subsequently struck off by the executioner upon the scaffold, for years decorated Temple Bar and the gates of Carlisle. We paid a visit to this spot not long ago. The moor itself is flat, dreary, barren, and

exposed; the unenclosed part of it may comprise about nine square miles of brushwood, heath, fern, moss, and broom; and as it stands high, being the broad summit of a range of country rising from the Murray Firth, it is cruelly swept over by cutting breezes in the winter.

A new road from Inverness to Forres has lately been cut directly across the spot where the hottest of the fight took place; and nothing now remains to indicate this spot, but the mounds of earth which were heaped over the buried slain. These consist of one long ridge where a number were cast into a trench and covered over, and of a number of scattered heaps, which have the appearance of single graves. Howbeit, the poor fellows who lie here are not permitted to repose quietly; for it is a favourite amusement with tourists of the present day, to carry spades and other delving instruments along with them to the ground, and there to grub in the sacred soil for the purpose of finding some trophy. The guide related that he accompanied an Irish gentleman on one of these mining expeditions only a short space before; and that the said Irish gentleman actually turned up a soldier's corroded coat button, and he bore it off with him to the Emerald Island with many triumphs broached in goodly brogue. In several places there were fresh-made pits of from one to two feet deep, as if some sacrilegious enthusiast

had been at work only the day before our visit; but the guide did not know whether anything had been found. He said that, at the making of the new road, when the soil was slightly levelled in two or three places, divers swords and other relics were brought to the light of day; and at the Octagon Tower so called, standing some three miles south-west of the battle-ground, there are still preserved two field-pieces used on the occasion.

About a quarter of a mile eastward of this martial cemetery, and close by the road-side, there stands a large solitary block of stone, measuring near five feet six high, and covering a basement of one hundred square feet, more or less: it is reported that the young prince stood upon this stone to overlook the bloody encounter; and that from this elevation he saw himself ruined.

We must not marvel that the plain of Waterloo should still at times yield military exuviæ to the searches of the curious, when we remember that the fight of Culloden happened nearly a century ago, and yet is not quite exhausted. The digging and scrutiny, however, are often vain, and rare is the chance that is successful. Human bones were at one period not unfrequently discovered, but these have now entirely merged into the soil by which they were covered; and little

will henceforth recompense the sentimental grave-digger, except, peradventure, a stray tooth or so, and such a trophy as a button or a flattened bullet.

CHAPTER XXII.

A Tragical Love Story of the "Olden Time."

There was a lover true indeed,
Who lived in Annandale;
And in this chapter ye may read,
Of him a piteous tale.

One blusterous day towards eventide, a horseman, clad in a coat belayed over with silver buttons, came hastily riding along by the waters of Annan, shewing many signs of impatience, as if he much wished to cross over. The river was broad, and the banks were high; no passable ford discovered itself to the scrutiny of his restless glance, and the stream rolled onward to the briny billows of the Firth, an unpitying barrier between himself and the lady of his love, whom he longed to be with.

This is one of the few stories, referring to the days of other years, whose scene is laid on the arena of which we write, that touches on the subject of the tender passion; most of the legends

and archives of that barbarous age being replete with war, martial exploits, robbery, and murder.

The horseman had come down through the pass of the Gatehope Slack, which yawns across one verge of Annandale; his steed was fagged, heated, wearied, and bespattered with mud from hard riding; and it was afterwards related that he had spurred on over bog, moor, and moss—through brake and through copse—and how the sparks of fire had flown from the iron shoes that were on the fore-feet of his beast.

"Now, my bonny mare," said he to the animal, as he turned her head to the stream; "now, my bonny mare, play your part well and carry me over. If you are the steed that bears me to my dearie, you shall be fed with hay and corn all the days that you live, and the rowel of a spur shall never prick your flank again."

Yet, notwithstanding she is averred to have been past compare for excellence, she was so thoroughly done up, now she came to the river, that no man could have urged her a furlong further, had he wagered a thousand marks on the chance; and it is not extraordinary, therefore, that there existed but small hope of her being able to swim the torrent.

Yet what was to be done? Was a lover to be disappointed? or rather, were two lovers to be disappointed in greeting each other, because a

horse was jaded to death, or because a flood of water rolled between them? "Love sees pathways to his will," says Shakspere, and "stony limits cannot hold love out," and so on;—nor watery ones either, say we—and Romeo Montague, who confessed that he was "no pilot," said to Juliet Capulet one night, "wert thou as far as that vast shore, washed by the furthest sea, I would adventure for such merchandise."

Now, if this young Montague, who was no pilot, could adventure to cross the furthest sea in the world, surely the juvenal before us, whose ardency is allowed to have been intense, could scarcely turn back from a fresh-water river, however terribly it might run and roar. And, to do him justice, he lacked not courage;—indeed, we think he is quite as highly to be commended as Romeo, although the voyage was so much shorter: for Romeo only *talked* about what he *would* do, *if* his lady had been beyond the sea, whereas this young Scot made no fine speeches to the moon, but plunged headlong into the stream. But stay;—we must not jump at the catastrophe too soon.

Finding his horse (which, by the bye, was a mare) thoroughly done up, and totally unable to bear him over, and above all, says the chronicle, terrified at hearing the water-kelpies scream, he looked about him for rescues; he was sorely perplexed in mind, and troubled in spirit—but he

incontinently bethought him of the ferry-man, and him he loudly hailed.

"Boatman," cried he, "put off your bark from the shore, and row me to the opposite bank: make no excuses, for none will I take; I must cross this angry flood to night: come, put off—here is gold."

Young bloods are ever hasty and impatient;—but this is nature in its real state, unrestrained by sober knowledge of consequences,—or by age when the spirits become sluggish,—or by the sufferance of many defeats, such as most men are tamed by, who have to stem, not only the torrent of rivers, but still more so, by having to stem the torrent of adverse circumstances in going onwards through the world. He who would know what nature is, must study it as revealed in young persons rather than in old ones. The nearer we go to the spring-head, the less sullied is the stream: and the nearer we go to the spring-head of our existence, the less sullied is our real and true cast of mind, with the hypocrisies, or little dissimulations, or acts of concealment, which we learn to practise, and by which we alter ourselves to our neighbours, and appear different people in age from what we did in youth. Children have not the art to conceal their passions that adults have; and hence a naturally passionate child soon lets those who are near it know that it is passionate,

whenever an occasion arises to call it forth. But when that same child reaches "the years of discretion," it knows how to subdue the anger that some inciting event may awaken; and thus, though burning with rage within, may appear all calmness without.

We do not believe that our in-born nature much changes as we live on; but think that whatever disposition we come into the world with, that same disposition will belong to us as long as we live: that a violent child will make a violent man; a timid child, a timid man; or an open-hearted child, a generous friend to all around him in aftertimes. These natures, severally appearing in several children, will certainly be modified, or softened, or directed, or regulated, by experience, intercourse, and common sense; but we contend that it is only a modification, and, perhaps, never a total or radical alteration of the original nature.

The ardent juvenal, who now desired to cross the river, may have been born with a reckless turn, which may not yet have been sufficiently modified by experience: but, be this as it may, the most sober of dispositions might have been fired with a transient eagerness, if placed in a situation like his, so trying and so tantalizing. And the man to whom he addressed himself may have been gifted at his birth with a timidity of soul, which

no long buffeting with mankind could fundamentally eradicate; but left him a man possessing not half the fearlessness of the young lover who spoke to him. It is true, their motives for the step were very dissimilar; and this may have swayed their temporary actions, independent of their real natures.

The stranger repeated his demand for a boat, and repeated his offer of gold; but the ferry-man commenced by inferring arguments of mighty force against an enterprise so absurd and so madly hazardous.

"It was but late yestreen," said he, "that I swore —not by one single oath, but by many,—that I would not set my joints to the trying of an impossibility; and for all the gold that at this moment enriches the fair kingdom of Scotland, I dare not pilot ye over this night."

So decided a refusal of all aid, might have withered the heart of any but the determined; no eloquence could overrule the persistency of the man, or the admonitions which he endeavoured to give to his customer. The one was as resolved as the other; this one to cross, and that one by no means to assent thereto. In such cases as this, matters are likely to come to extremity; and albeit these two were not Greeks, who tug hard when they encounter in war, still they appear to have tugged hard as Scotchmen, not in a matter of warfare, but rather in logical sophisms, and

running counter arguments. It was all nothing—the lover was resolved; and the man finding that persuasive words were vain, now essayed to work upon his fears by a tragical anecdote,—as how a traveller, nigh these parts met a horrible death in the waters.

"I once," he commenced solemnly, "in my early days heard, (I say heard, for it was night, and I could not see,) a traveller drowning; not in the Annan itself, but in the Frith of Solway, close by the mouth of the river. The influx of the tide had unhorsed him in the night, as he was passing the sands from Cumberland. The west wind blew a tempest, and, according to the common expression, brought in the water *three foot a breast.* The traveller got upon a standing net, a little way from the shore. Here he lashed himself to the post, shouting for half an hour for assistance, till the tide rose over his head! In the darkness of night, and amid the pauses of the hurricane, his voice, heard at intervals, was exquisitely mournful. No one could go to his assistance—no one knew where he was—the sound seemed to proceed from the spirit of the waters. But morning rose—the tide had ebbed—and the poor traveller was found lashed to the pole of the net, and bleaching in the wind."*

* This last is, in reality, part of a letter written by Dr. Currie, the Editor and biographer of Robert Burns, to Sir

If this was not enough to reduce a lover to reason, we know not what else could succeed. Love and madness have ever been held to be one and the same thing: and, of a truth, we think that this lover was not far removed from the madman, if he could suffer his passion to conduct him into the rushing element.

All that the boatman could say in the way of dissuasion availed just nothing at all; it helped not, it prevailed not: he saw that madmen had no ears.

The tortured lover could endure no longer; he threw off his coat, garnished with silver buttons, and rent the waistcoat from his breast: he approached the bank near the tail of the ford; and turning adrift his horse, plunged headlong into the roaring waters.

He was an excellent swimmer; and vigorously he struck out arms and buffetted with the passing torrent, which was here broad and deep. Such, however, was its violence and rapidity, that he was soon hurried out of his course, so as to

Walter Scott: and is given by Sir Walter in the Minstrelsy of the Scottish border.

It, of course, is no part of the old ballad which forms the thesis of this chapter; but as it is so connected with the subject, we thought we could not do better than bring it forward in the mouth of the ferry-man.

Dr. Currie died at Sidmouth, in Devonshire, in 1805, and there is a tablet to his memory in the church.

be totally unable to push his way onward to the distant shore beyond him. He struggled — he gasped—he sank—he rose—he blew the water out of his nostrils, and made a convulsive effort to swim on again; the eddy bewildered him—he madly caught at the branch of a bush that hung over him as he was swept by—alas! it broke off short in his hand—he was thoroughly exhausted—he sank to the bottom—and he never rose to the surface again, but there died!

Such was the terror and lamentation round about Annan when the tidings of this sad catastrophe became known, that a bridge was shortly built over the river to prevent the like in future, and the ford and the ferry-boat were never used afterwards. This was like locking the front door when the thief has entered.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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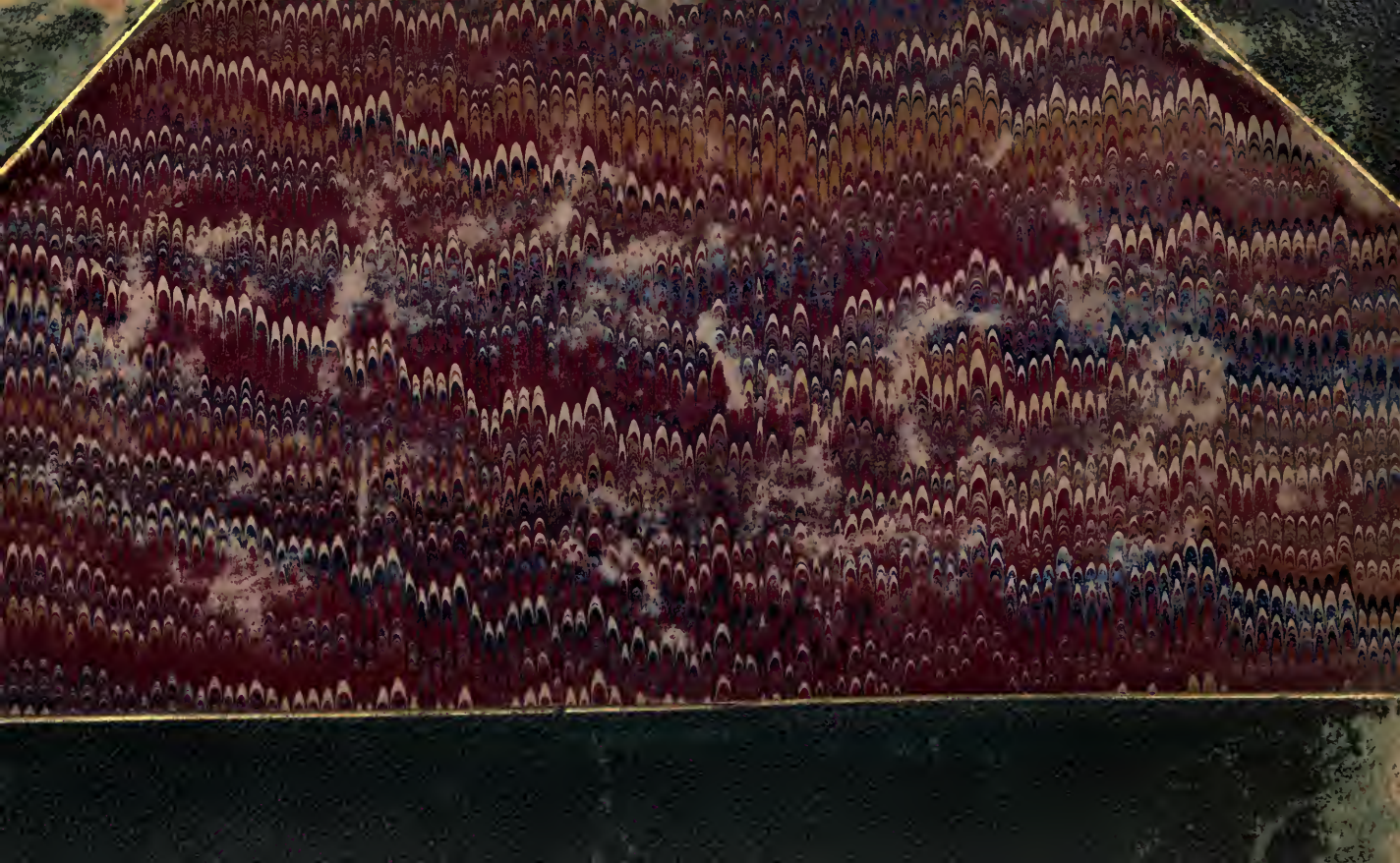
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